

CHAKMAS AN EMBATTLED TRIBE



S.P. TALUKDAR

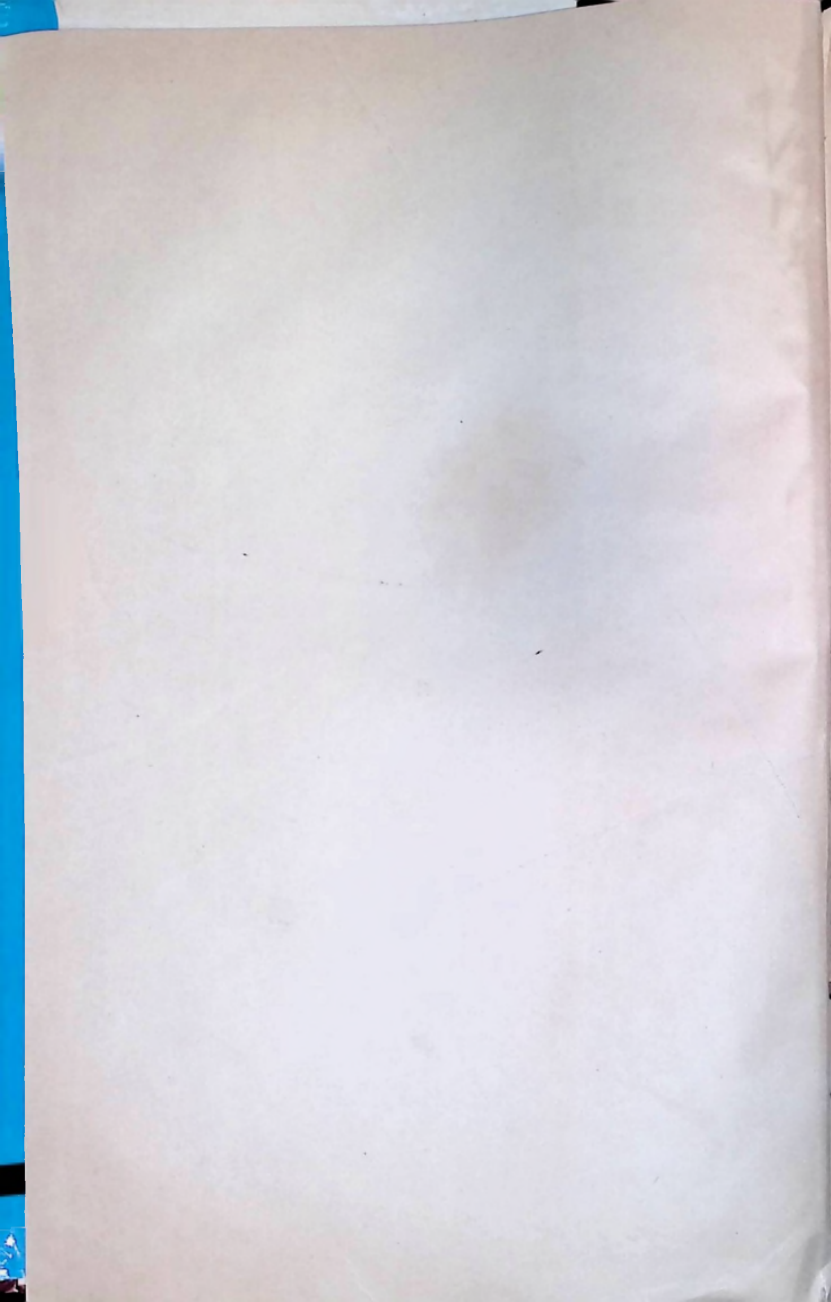
Till 1947, the Chittagong Hill Tracts (now in Bangladesh) was the place of the Chakmas, the earliest settlers in this low mountaineous ranges which extends up to the sea coast of the Bay of Bengal. Many of them had to flee their homeland due to demographic pressure out of migration of people from the plains into the Hill tracts of Chittagong. And now a large number of them are living in many parts in the North Eastern States in India and also in the North of Arakan in Burma. They have lost the mainspring of their lives.

They trace their ancestral pedigree from the tree of the Sakya Family in which the greatest sage Buddha was born. Therefore, they traditionaley belong to the Buddhist Family (religion) which is regarded to be the champion of peace. Their philosophy of life has been transformed with the ethics of their religion.

Their growing struggle for existence rapidly increased beyond all proportions due to occupation of their lands forcibly by the people from the plains. When all their hopes were belied then they stood up to resist against all much operations. As a result of this, there was wide-spread violence all over the Chittagong Hill Tracts. As a result , 60,000 Chakmas had to cross over to India and took shelter in the refugee camps in Tripura. Now, after 8 years of living in the refugee camps, there has been a faint ray of hope of their return to their homeland when the Chakma Leaders of the refugees reached an agreement with the authorities of the Bangladesh Government. The repatriation of the refugees has started from, February 1994.

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CHAKMAS : AN EMBATTLED TRIBE

THE GREAT EASTERN

CHAKMAS : An Embattled Tribe

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RAJ BHAVAN
Aizawal

P.R. KYNDIAH
Governor of Mizoram

Foreword

In writing this book on the Chakmas, Shri Talukdar has researched his data thoroughly and has made a determined and successful effort to cover the wide spectrum of the life of the Chakmas. The book gives a qualified and graphic account of these people in a systematic manner. The author, himself a Chakma, has done full justice to the cause of the Chakmas by projecting different aspects of their life and history in its right perspective.

I hope this book will enlighten the readers about the Chakmas and that most of the people will find this book useful and informative.

May 3, 1984
Aizawal

P.R. KYNDIAH

Preface

The Chittagong Hill Tracts is a tiny frontier area within the territory of Bangladesh sharing the international border with India and Myanmar (previously Burma). Inhabitants of this area are perhaps the least known people of Asia being the residents of a remote and backward area which is of little political or economic consequence. This place has been the homeland of the Hill Chakmas for centuries. In 1947 the British Raj came to an end and this saw the tragic partition of the Indian Sub-continent. But this was more painful for the Chakmas. 98% of the inhabitants of the area were indigenous people of Mongolian stock. Buddhism was their dominant religion and it had ingrained in them the values of non-violence and peaceful co-existence. Consequently, in comparison to other tribes of this region the Chakmas are more tolerant and peace loving. If, they have taken up arms today it is only as a last resort, in the face of an assault from the ruling powers of Bangladesh that threatened the very existence of this small ethnic group.

The Chakma problem, apart from other things has its genesis in the partition of the Indian Sub-continent in 1947. It is a quirk of fate that the people of Chittagong Hill Tracts much against their wishes were included in the theocratic Islamic country of Pakistan, they had, indeed, desired to be a part of secular India. For obvious reasons they continued to incur the anger of a Muslim dominated majority as a small Buddhist minority. From 14th August, 1947 for the Chakmas

of Chittagong Hill Tracts it is a different story—a story of untold misery and human tragedy. Even if British colonialism ended in the Indian sub-continent for the Chakmas it was a renewal of its worst type, under both the Government of Pakistan and later under the government of Bangladesh (which became an independent sovereign country in 1971).

Freedom and self-respect are dear to any community or group under any dispensation. For these reasons the Bengalis of Bangladesh took up arms and fought against the Pakistanis. Their resentment against an oppressive regime turned into a struggle for freedom when URDU was imposed on them. Ironically, the country which owes its freedom to the principles of right to live culturally and socially of one's own and right to religion turned to a genie of atrocity against its own minority tribal population. Powerless and poor, the Chakmas were pushed to the wall. The situation turned from bad to worse and over the years a mini war situation has been created. In terms of human loss, the Chakmas now may quality to be declared as endangered species. But who cares ?

Yes, one may talk of the world community taking note of its or the U.N.O. to take care of such a man made tragedy. Each time an accusing finger is pointed as the Government of Bangladesh it comes with some excuses. But these excuses used to be fatal for the Chakmas. Because the incidents of atrocities reported are only the tip of the iceberg. Very often the explanation offered by the ruling elites in Dhaka are far removed from truth. The UNO is shouting from its house top for negotiated settlements for such ethnic conflicts. However, negotiations or settlement of Chakma problem eludes them everytime, It is undertaken while a large number of them still languish in refugee camps in India. The fact remains that the Government in Dhaka whatever hue it may have may not rest at peace till the last Chakma lives in Chittagong Hill Tracts. I do not say that the Chakma may be totally wiped out but he may be forced to exist as a converted Muslim within the body of a Mongolian and Buddhist to the core. To add to the bane of already prevailling discontent the Muslim fundamentalists

are given a free hand to make inroads into Chittagong Hill Tracts, by the Government. Religious persecution has been on the rise.

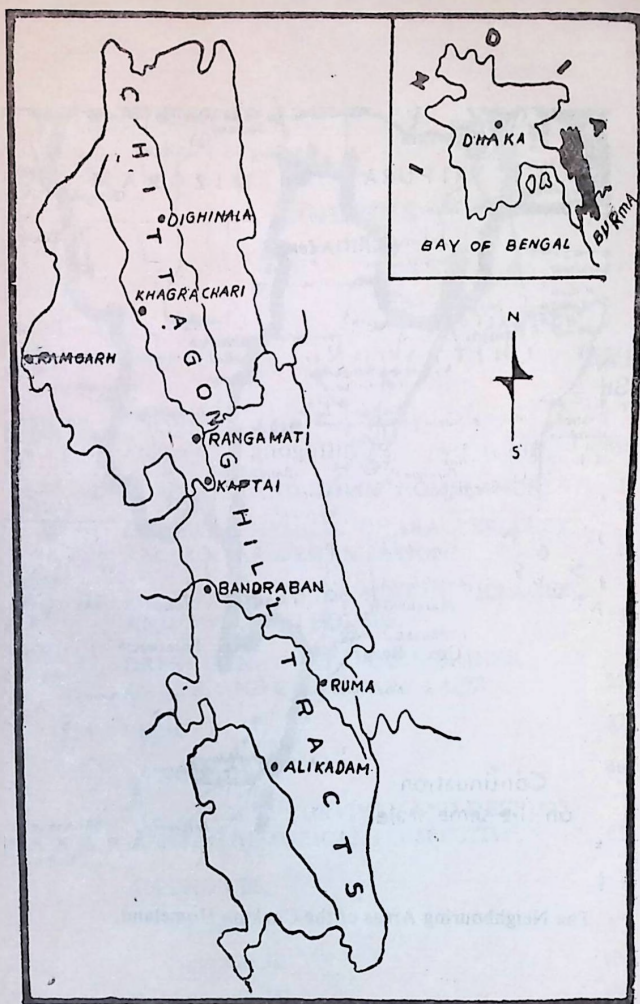
During the British rule, Chittagong Hill Tracts was an EXCLUDED AREA. This status helped the Chakmas to preserve their socio-cultural, religious identity. With the abrogation of the EXCLUDED AREA status of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (a status which is still maintained in India for some Tribal areas much more advance than the Chakmas in every sphere of economic development) the plight of the hill tribes multiplied. In the absence of a legal safeguard it become a field day for the land hungry, marauding muslims from the plains of Bangladesh to dominate the docile, innocent Chakmas. In their own land the Chakmas became strangers. To add to the problem, the Government of Bangladesh encouraged settlers from the plains trying to convert the Chakma into minority in their own homeland. Thus, land grabbing, religious persecution became a routine affair in Chittagong Hill Tracts since 1963 when a dam was constructed across the river Karnaphuli at Kaptai submerging 40% of the available land of the area. More than 40 thousand people were uprooted from their home and hearth and were forced to flee to India, a majority of whom now live in the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh as stateless citizens (they are not granted citizenship as yet).

The attempt here is not to begin a witch hunt or a process of mud slinging but to present before the world the story and identity of Chakmas which lies under heaps of ignorance and neglect.

As things stand today, the Chittagong Hill Tracts and the people who have known it as their home for centuries is under seize. Even a robust optimist cannot hope for a bright future for the Chakmas of Chittagong Hill Tracts. Are they going to be come extinct from the face of earth as a distinct tribe as an ethnic group and as a religious group for ever ? Can this not be avoided ?

In preparing this book, I have received numerous suggestions from various persons. I am unable to convey my thanks to all of them individually. But I must record my sincere thanks and gratefulness to Professor Sachchidananda, former Director A.N. Sinha Institute of Social Studies, Patna and Former Vice-Chancellor of Ranchi University for going through the manuscript and for his numerous suggestions in the preparation of this book, To Dr S. Ganguly and K.C. Baral of English Deptt NEHU special thanks are due for constant guidance and encouragement in pursuance of this work. Their encouragement helped the writer to proceed with the work to the end. This book could not have succeeded to see the light of today without the untiring help and co-operation of Ms. Bindu my wife and my daughters Navina, Nandina and Angelina.

S.P. TALUKDAR



A Map of The Chakma Homeland
(Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh)



The Neighbouring Areas of the Chakma Homeland.

Contents

<i>Chapters</i>	<i>Pages</i>
<i>Foreword</i>	v
<i>Preface</i>	vii
I. CHAKMAS AND THEIR HOMELANDS.	1
II. ORIGINS, PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS AND SOCIAL ORGANISATION.	7
III. PATTERN OF SETTLEMENT OF VILLAGES AND DWELLING HOUSES.	23
IV. DRESS, ORNAMENT, FOOD, DRINKS, GAMES, AND CUSTOMARY LAWS.	27
V. RELIGION.	37
VI. LANGUAGE.	46
VII. PROBLEMS OF SURVIVAL AND DEVELOP- MENT IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE.	61
APPENDICES.	95
Appendix I.	97
Appendix II.	100
Appendix III.	101

<i>Chapters</i>	<i>Pages</i>
Appendix IV.	111
Appendix V.	115
Appendix VI.	117
Appendix VII.	124
Appendix VIII.	131
Appendix IX.	134
Appendix X.	136
Appendix XI.	143
<i>INDEX.</i>	167

CHAPTER I

The Chakmas and their Homelands

The Chittagong Hill Tracts of the Bangladesh lying between $20^{\circ} 13'$ and $23^{\circ} 47'N$, latitude, and between $91^{\circ} 46'$ and $92^{\circ} 49'E$ longitude is the homeland of the Chakmas. It covers an area of 5,138 Sq. miles flanked by Tripura of India in the North, Chittagong District of Bangladesh in the West, Arakan of Burma in the South, and Mizoram of India in the east. The eastern boundary of the Chittagong Hill Tract is formed by a line running from the South-east corner of the Tripura state of India, along the coast of the river Sajek (khawthlangtuipei) which forms the international boundary between India and Bangladesh till it joins with the river Karnaphuli and thence along the coast of the river Thega which forms international boundary between India and Bangladesh until it meets on the Arakan border.

Rangamati is the Administrative Headquarter of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Division which has been divided into three Districts in 1989. The Chittagong Hill Tracts has four major valleys, constituted by its four principal rivers—The PHENI, the KARNAPHULI, the SANGU, the MATAMURI and their tributaries. The valleys are delineated by a change of hills which run in South to North Western line. All the rivers

originate in the mountains of north Arakan in Burma. The rivers bank, the rivers bend and the river valleys are dotted with the Chakma villages.

As has already been mentioned the Chittagong Hill Tracts is divided into three Hill Districts with Headquarters at Rangamati, Bandarban and Khagrachari incidentally the names of the Headquarters and districts are same. These districts are under a nominal Autonomous District Councils with limited self autonomy. Some of the important towns of the region are—Ramgarh, Guimara, Matiranga, Panchuri, Dighinala, Mahalchari, Laxmichari, Manikchari, Baghichari, Sajek, Barkal, Longudu, Nanichari, Butbuni, Bandarban, Ruma, Lama and Alikadam.

The highest peaks in the Chittagong Hill Tracts are—Rang Dang (2,789 ft.) and Luraimtang (2,355 ft.), both peaks are in the Tyambang range; and Basitang (2,181 ft.).

Varieties of wild animals were found in abundance in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. During the British period the Government supply of elephants was derived from this area. The two horn variety of rhinoceros was found in the valleys of the Thega and Kasalong rivers. Besides these wild animals Leopard, Tigers, Gyal (mithun), Snakes, Black Bear, Malay Bears, Sambard Deer, Wild Buffaloes, Jungle Fowl, Pigeons, Himalayan Goats, Wild Pigs, several kinds of birds and monkeys were plentiful throughout the District. With the passages of time the wild life has greatly reduced and some species have already become extinct. This is primarily due to a great ecological change that has taken place from the beginning of 1963 following the construction of a dam across the Karnaphuli river at Kaptai. The vast water reservoir created by this Dam not only uprooted more than one lakh Chakma people from their ancestral houses but is also submerged the river valleys, marshy land which was very suitable for agriculture and the forest cover made it suitable for wild animals.

The Chittagong Hill Tracts is abound with a wide variety of flora and fauna which has also greatly changed in recent years

with the change of ecology and environment. It has brought new opportunities and new trades which are new to the Chakmas of Chittagong Hill Tracts. All the river routes in the Chittagong Hill Tracts have now become suitable for mechanised river navigation. Also pisciculture been adopted as a means of livelihood extensively. Till 1963 there was no fishing village but now many people live solely on fishing.

The Chittagong Hill Tracts has a tropical climate. Malaria is prevalent in the valleys.

The Chakmas are the earliest settlers in this land. Undoubtedly they immigrated from Arakan and swamped over this area around the 12th Century. The details of their original history would be discussed in the historical chapter and social development.

The word CHAKMA or CHUKMA (as spelt by some British Scholars) is a generic term given to a predominant hill tribe of Chittagong Hill Tracts (besides the Chakmas there are other 12 different small hill tribes in Chittagong Hill Tracts, but the Chakmas formed the largest tribe and spread all over). Now, the Chakmas spread across the Arakan (Myanmar) and the Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh and also in some of the states in North East India. The British Administrators who ruled over Burma and the British Scholars studied the Chakma living in these tracts of hills from mid 18th to 20th Century. This ethnic tribal groups have been named by the British Scholars as Chakma. The word Chakma is therefore, a recent appellation given to the hill tribes of Chittagong Hill Tracts.

It is interesting to observe here that the word Chakma in English is not pronounced as it is spelt. Any Chakma even to this day, would pronounce himself as CHANGMA or SAWNGMA and not CHAKMA. This form was used for the group before this English spelling came into vogue. There is nothing unusual if we take into consideration variance in spelling of many other popular names. To cite one instance only, there are many different English spellings of the famous

Chinese traveller and Scholar Huien Tsang (who travelled in India about 629-45 A.D.) e.g. Hiuen Tsang, Hiuen Tsaing, Yuen Chawng and Hiouen Thsang. Similarly, the name of the clan in which Lord Buddha was born is spelt out as 'The-kee-ya' but pronounced as 'Sa-kee-ya' or Sakya. Therefore, the pronunciation of Thek also corresponds 'SAW'. In other words, Tsak or Thek is also spelt as Chaw or Saw. The spelling with the pronunciation most nearer would be 'TSAKMA' or 'CHAWNGMA'.

Here I would like to present an extract from Hutchinson's experience of the Chakma hand.

The river Karnaphuli known to the hill people as Kynsa Khyong derives its name from the Sanskrit 'Karna' ear and "phuli" flower, literally the ear flower or earring. The daughter of a Muhammadan Wazir of Chittagong during the Moghal rule is credited with dropping her earring into the river while out on a pleasure trip. The river rises in the hills to the north of Lungleh in the subdivision of the Lushai Hills District and has a length of 170 miles. After a most tortuous course through the hills, the river emerges into the plains of Chittagong at Chandraghona, and, flowing past Chittagong, falls into the Bay of Bengal. The scenery from the source of the river to Demagiri in the Lushai Hills District is grand. The river winds in and out between lofty mountains covered with dense forest to the water's edge, through precipitous rocky gorges of sandstone, over rapids and falls, with here and there big deep pools whose dark and silent waters team with every variety of fish. It enters the Chittagong Hill Tracts four miles below Demagiri, and the scenery becomes for the most part dull and uninteresting as it flows between steep and abrupt banks composed of a schistose c'ay, its sides covered with tall elephant grass which effectually prevents any view of the surrounding country. At Barkal the scene changes to one of great grandeur. High cliffs tower on the left bank, the river

breaks up into channels flowing between forest covered islands, and then opening out into a big pool, dashes down a long stretch of rapids, between huge boulders, the bubbling waves breaking through the rocks with the fitful roar of a surfbeat shore. The next point of interest is a gorge ten miles above Rangamati; here the river flows between dark cliffs of a brown vitreous rock, patched and mottled with lichens and mosses of various colours, towering up on either hand; while occasionally on the right or left, shoots back a dark gorge of impenetrable jungle. Between this point and Chanraghona the scenery is again dull. Just before the river finally leaves the hills and debouches into the plains the scenery is exceedingly pretty and most refreshing to those used to the dead level monotony of the scenery of Eastern Bengal. The important tributaries of the Karnaphuli are the Kaptai, Rhainkhyong, Subhalong and Thega on the left, and Chengri, Kasalong and Harina on the right banks. Although these rivers are of considerable depth during the rains, the rapidity and violence of their currents and their sharp turns and whirling eddies, render them unnavigable by large craft, but a large trade is carried on, both up and down stream, during the rest of the year. The Pheni river, which forms the northern boundary of the Hill Tracts, leaves the District at Ramghar, and during its course through the hills is of little importance for purpose of navigation.

The Sangu river is in the south of the district; the upper reaches are known to the Maghs as Sabok Khyong, and near Bandarban as Rigray Khyong, giving the name to the sept to which the Bohmong or ruling family belongs. In the plains it is known as the Sangu which is a corruption of "Sankha" a shell.

The Matamuri river or Moree Khyong is south of the Sangu; it is extremely shallow and of little importance. Captain Lewin thus describes the scenery on the Twine Khyong, a

tributary of this river : "The stream ran briskly in a narrow pebbly bed between banks that rose nearly perpendicularly, and so high that the sun only came down to us by glints here and there. Enormous tree ferns hung over our heads some fifty feet up, while the straight stems of the Garjan tree shot up without a branch like white pillars in a temple; plantains, with their broad drooping fronds of transparent emerald, broke at intervals the dark green wall of jungle that towered up in the background, and from some gnarled old forest giant here and there, the long curving creepers threw across the stream a bridge of nature's own making. Sometimes we came upon a recess in the bank of verdure which rose on either hand; and then the tinkling of a cascade would be heard behind the veil, its entry into the stream being marked by a great grey heap of rounded rocks and boulders, tossed about in a way that showed with what a sweep the water comes down in the rains." (Allahabad 1909 p⁷. Chittagong Hill Tracts, R.H. Sneyd Hutchinson).

Note

We find that till 1869, the British administrators used the spelling CHUKMA to refer to the inhabitants of the Chittagong hill tracts. Subsequently, the spelling become CHAKMA (may be due to slip of pen).

CHAPTER II

Origins, Physical Characteristics and Social Organisation

The origin of the Chakmas is too obscure, but it is not difficult to reconstruct it. We know that from 1052 A.D. the Chakmas started moving from Arakan (Burma) into the adjoining areas of Bengal right down to the plain areas of Chittagong. Their principal movement was through the hilly rivers flowing out from Arakan i.e. Matamouree, Sangoo, Raing—Khyong, Thega and Tuichong and they built their villages on the river banks. The British scholars have called the Chakmas 'Kyangtha' (a Burmese/Arakanese word) which means the children of the river.

The Chakmas believe that their history connects them with the mountainous kingdom of 'KALAP' nagar in the Himalayan ranges (which is likely to be a part of the present Nepal; KAPIL NAGAR was an ancient place at the time of Buddha). We find that a Sakya dynasty (in which the great sage Gautama Buddha was born) was established in north Arakan long before the birth of Gautama Buddha. A Sakya Prince, Abhi Raja, around 923 B.C. came to Burma from Kapilavastu, in the foot hills of the Himalayas on way to Arakan and later founded a Sakya line of dynasty at Dha-nya-wa-ti in north Arakan, not

far from the hill tracts of Chittagong in Bengal. The description of this historic kingdom is as follows :

The city Dha-ngya-wa-ti on the bank of the Ga-tsha-ba river now Kolodan in Arakan was raided by the king Ang-dza-na, the son of Kapilawat of Magadha, and of this race fifty five kings reigned over a period of 1800 years. Another dynasty then succeeded, which numbered twenty four kings, whose reign extended throughout a period of 835 years. Then came the king Tsandathoveeya, who was not of a different dynasty, but in his reign the Boodh Gautama; having been born in Magadha, visited Arakan. The pious king built the famous temple of Mahamuni, in his honour, this still exists. The ruins of the ancient temple of Mahamuni built entirely of stone, the site of the former cities, shown by the ruins of tanks and ruins of Pagodas, the extensive stone walls at the old capital, certainly tell more of flourishing kingdom then what the British found it. (Harvey, British Rule in Burma Vol-10).

It is also mentioned in the dynastic record of Burma that princes of Sakya dynasty of northern India ruled the upper Burma both before and after Buddha. Tagaung Yazawn says that the first Sakya prince to enter Burma with his army was Abhi Raja of Kapilavastu (Kapilavastu or middle kingdom) as early as 923 C.C, that is about 360 years before the birth of Gautama, the Buddha. He went by way of Arakan and founded, for the first time, a kingdom called Sangassaratha in the Tagaung country of Burma. The capital was established in the site of the old Pagan, called Kambuja Thintaw or simply Chindwe on the left bank of the Irrawady. According to Hall the date of foundation of Tagaung in the Burma chronicles corresponds to 850 B.C. and the stories these chronicles tell are copies of Indian legends taken from Sanskrit or Pali originals. It seems Abhi Raja's connection with his own country ceased and he merged himself with

the local population. His two sons are known by their Burmanised names Kan Kajahgi and Kan Rajahnge. He carried to Burma pre-Buddhist culture and tradition of the Sakya, then a people of the Sub-Himalayan tract of north India, but whose original habitat was probably at Sakya in southern Tibet to the north of Sikkim. It is very doubtful whether the Aryan rule at all extended over that part of the country in the early period, though of course, the impact of Vedic culture must have been felt by the people living in the Gangetic valley.

The thirty third descendant of the Sakya line of princes of old Pagan or Tagaung was Binnaka Raja a contemporary of Gautama, the Buddha. During his reign and about the commencement of the Buddhist era the Tayoks (Tarops) from Gandhala (Yun-nan) invaded his country about the date mentioned above, captured Tagaung, destroyed it and compelled the Raja to quit the country. The Raja and his family, with other followers, entered the Mali stream and took refuge at Mali on the right bank of the Irrawady almost opposite the present ruins of lower Sabenago (CHAMPA NAGAR).

(Padmeswar Gogoi, *The Tai and the Tai Kingdom*, p. 104)

The Chakma believe that their ancestral home was at CHAMPAK Nagar and the inhabitants of this place are known as Chakma. We find that the Sakya line of kingdom one in India (presently in Bihar) and one in Burma just mentioned above. The movement of the Sakya race from Champa to Arakan is an historical fact. The Chakmas frequently use the word Magada to indicate a person which probably refers to the Sakyas of Magada who migrated to Arakan in different ages. We have the knowledge of another Sakya Prince Dhaja Raja of Kapilavastu who entered Burma (Arakan) around 523 B.C. due to the invasion of Kapilavastu by Prince of Kosala. The

contemporary Sokya Prince in Burma was Binnakya Raja. History refers the Sakya kingdom at Dha-nya-wa-ti in Arakan as under :

It was at Kyaukpadaung (a mountainous hill in Arakan) immediately to the south east of new Pagan that he Kan Rajangi (eldest son of Abhi raja) placed his son Maducitta as the ruler over the Pyu, Kanran (or the Kanyan who were Arakanese) and Sak (Thek) tribes of the area. Maducitta next moved to Rakhang leaving his line of rulers at Kyaukpadaung and founded the kingdom at Dha-nya-wa-ti.

(Padmeswar Gogoi, the Tai and the Tai Kingdom, p. 110)

The famous British Scholar R. Beileau Pemberton in his report on the Eastern Frontier of British India had acknowledged that near the ancient capital Dhanyavati, there stood at the head of interior branch of the Gat-sha-Bha or Kolodine about 50 miles from Akyab a principal city known as Babootoung. The principal creek near Babootoung hills throw off two branches which run through and are crossed by lofty wooden bridges largely out of repair. On the southern side of the principal street which runs east and west, are the ruins of the ancient palace and fort, consisting of the triple square enclosure of stone and brick wall, connected with lime; the stone having apparently been originally employed in the construction and subsequent repair effected with bricks and the work altogether is of considerable extent, and the labour bestowed in connecting the different detached hills by curtain of stones and brick walls must have been immense. They are now in a dilapidated state and as sites more favourably situated have been selected for occupation by the civil and military authorities of the province, it can never be an object of importance to repair these works. The inhabitants of the town may be estimated at from eight to ten thousand, and they consist principally of old respectable families who are continuously attached to the spot.

This country remained isolated and cut off from the mainstream of the world historical development during the Christian era and would have been blotted out from human memory but for some obscure historical records. Thus it remained a closed country unknown to the modern world. For the same reason the people of Mahamuni could not play their due role in the progress of world history as compared to the people of the two other peninsulas of Asia-India and Arabia.

At Rangoonia (a border place between the Chittagong Hill Tracts and Chittagong) there stands a Manamuni temple (in testimony of their avowal of affinity with the races of Dhangyawadi and Babootong where the original shrine of Mahamuni stood). This was constructed by the Chakmas and the Maghs who also migrated from Arakan. The social culture and the traditions of these people are very close to the Arakanese, as they were the people of the same place. They all have great reverence for Mahamuni.

The earliest race (tribe) in Burma and Arakan is known as T-sak, Shak or Thek, as already mentioned. According to the British Scholars the Chakma belong to this stock. It is now abundantly clear that the Chakma are the product of the mixture of the Shakyas of Kapilavastu (Magada) and the Thek tribe of Burma.

They established a kingdom in Arakan as recorded in the history. In the 9th Century, the King of Arakan made an expedition into Bengal and conquered Chittagong (the name has been derived from Sit-ta-gaung in Arakanese language). From 10th to 15th Centuries Araksu was invaded from the South-east by Burmese, Shans, Talaings, Pyus and other tribes from beyond the Yoma ranges, which separate Arakan from the Irrawady valley, and with internal revolutions or dynastic struggle among the Arakanese themselves. In the 13th Century the Arakanese began to push northwards into southeastern Bengal and twice received tribute or presents (1237 and 1294 AD) from the Bengali kings at Sonargaon in Decca district. Again between 1560 and 1570 conquered Chittagong and from

this time onwards the Arakan king came to know the power of the great Moghul Empire which was in the next door and about to make inroads in the hills. In 1664-1675 AD, Shaista Khan, the Viceroy of Moghul Empire in Bengal seized Chittagong and during the next century, the king of Arakan became very weak due to dynastic struggle and ultimately in 1784 the ancient kingdom of Arakan was finally subdued to the Burmese. This domestic calamity pushed royal families, to leave the Arakan kingdom.

The British Government came to know about the Chakmas in Chittagong Hill Tracts in 1777. According to history the Chakma Raja, MAREK YAJA immigrated from Arakan to Bengal bordering Arakan area around 15th century. May be, before his coming his subjects had already settled in this secluded area. It is quite clear that the Chakma king was a scion of the noble family of the Arakan Chiefs. Based on the characteristics of the Tibeto Burman languages, the Chakma fall under the Baric group (Assam); the tone of their language is very similar to Assamese.

Physical Characteristics

The skull characteristic of the Chakmas are as follows :

Proportions of head (Cephalic index)

Average	—	84.3
Maximum	—	96
Minimum	—	77
Range	—	19

Proportion of Nose (Nasal Index)

Average	—	84.5
Maximum	—	105
Minimum	—	70
Range	—	35

Relative Prominence of root of Nose
(Orbito—Nasal Index)

Average	—	106.4
Maximum	—	112
Minimum	—	120
Range	—	10
Stature		CM
Average	—	159.5
Maximum	—	169.6
Minimum	—	149.0
Range	—	20.6

INDICES

Number of Subjects

(Head)

Median Heads	77 and under	77.5—3
(Mesocephalic)	77.5 and under	80 —15
Broad Heads	80 and under	82.5—16
(Brochycephalic)	82.5 and under	85 —21
	85 „ „	87.5—19
	87.5 „ „	90 —18
	90 „ over	—8

Nose

Medium Noses	70 and under	75 —2
(Mesorhine)	75 „ „	80 —28
	80 „ „	85 —20
Broad Noses	85 and under	90 —31
(Platyrrhine)	90 „ „	95 —9
	95 „ „	100 —6
	100 „ over	—4

Root of Nose

Platy-opic	101 and under 104	—14
Flat	104 „ „ 107	—45
	107 „ „ 110	—37
Mesopic (medium)	110 and under 113	—4

Stature (centimetres)

Short	under 155 (5' 1")	—19
	155 and under 160	—33
	5'—1"—5'—3"	
Below mean	160 and under	165—33
	5'—3"—5'—5"	
Above mean	165 and under	170—15
	5'—5"—5'—7"	

(H.H. Risley, Census of India 1901).

Social Organisation

The Chakma are divided into four major groups :

- (i) Annakya Chakma : Those Chakma who had immigrated to the CHT from Arakan;
- (ii) Rowyangya Chakma : Those Chakma who had remained at Arakan;
- (iii) Doing-Nak Chakma : They are the sub-tribe of the Chakma. They are mostly found in Arakan;
- (iv) Tongchhonggya or Tangyanya or Tungjanya Chakmas : They are also one of the sub tribe of the Chakmas. They are found in CHT and also in Arakan.

The internal structure of the Chakma society has been described as :

The Chakmas are divided into three sub tribes—Chakma, Doingnak, Tungjainya or Tangjangya. The Doingnaks are believed to have broken off from the parent tribe about a century ago, when Jaun Baksh Khan (1782) was chief, in consequence of his having ordered them to intermarry with the other branches of the tribe. This innovation was violently disapproved of, and many Doingnaks abandoned their homes on the Karnaphuli river and fled to Arakan. Later some of them have returned and settled in the hills of the Cox's Bazar sub-division. When Captain Lewin wrote, the Doingnaks spoke an Arakanese dialect, and had not acquired the corrupt form of Bengali which is spoken by the rest of the Chakma. The Tunajainya sub-tribe is said to have come into the Chittagong hills from Arakan as late as 1819, when Dharam Baksh Khan was Chief. A number of them, however, soon returned to Arakan in consequence of the Chief's refusal to recognise the claims of their leader, Phapru, to the leadership of the sub-tribe.

(H.H. Risley, *The Tribes and Caste of Bengal*, Vol. I, 169).

The Chakmas are divided into five Collateral lines (sept) which are known as 'Gudthis'. The origin of each Gudthi refers to an incident in the past out of which the Gudthi line had arisen. The male in the line belongs to one Gudthi (in the case of Women, they will enter into different Gudthi after their marriage). The tribe is further divided into many territorial groups called 'Gaja'. One may find people from different Gudthis in a Gaja. At the helm of each Gaja was a head Man who generally possessed titles 'DEWAN' or 'TALUKDAR'. The head man, king etc. used to be found from among the elite class of the Chakmas. Once in their position as head man, king etc. the privilege of such recognition passed on to their descendants. The Dewan and Talukdars were in fact tax collectors from the area under their charge and

they were responsible for the payment of collected taxes of their jurisdiction (Taluk or Mouza) to the Chakma Chief (king) on a fixed date called 'PUNNAHA'. In the village administration the head man were assisted by 'KHISHAS' and 'KARBARIES' who were more like friends, philosopher and guides for the villagers.

The names of the Gudthis and the Gajas are give below :

- (i) *Dhurjya Gudthi* : Dhurjya was the name of a Chieftain who lived at Bakkhali in the district of Chittagong. The decendents of this Chieftain are known as Boga Gaja;
- (ii) *Kurjya Gudthi* : The progenitor of this hereditary line was known as Juriya. The people of this clan are known as Tanya gaja;
- (iii) *Dhabana Gudthi* : The progenitor of this hereditary line was known as Dhabana and the people of this clan are known as Mulima gaja;
- (iv) *Pira Bhānga Gudthi* : As the story goes, once the Chieftain sat on a wooden seat which broke down under his weight and since then the people of this clan are known as Phira Bhanga;
- (v) *Mendar Gudthi* : (means indignity). This Gudthi has practically been extinct, as it gives a derogatory low caste feeling.

The following is the list of the gajas :

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| (i) Amu | (viii) Bunga |
| (ii) Bamu | (ix) Bangza |
| (iii) Baboro | (x) Dhamei |
| (iv) Barbwa | (xi) Durja |
| (v) Batalya | (xii) Dawin |
| (vi) Boga | (xiii) Dhabana |
| (vii) Borsaga | (xiv) Dhurjya |

(xv) Kala	(xxix) Phedungsa
(xvi) Kengrang	(xxx) Phema
(xvii) Khambe	(xxxi) Phira Bhanga
(xviii) Henge	(xxxii) Rangi
(xix) Kurr	(xxxiii) Rangi Celumya
(xx) Kurjya	(xxxiv) Sadongya
(xxi) Kutua	(xxxv) Sega
(xxii) Larma	(xxxvi) Sekeya
(xxiii) Leba	(xxxvii) Shealya
(xxiv) Laskra	(xxxviii) Tonya
(xxv) Molima	(xxxix) Uksarri
(xxvi) Molima Sege	(xl) Oangza
(xxvii) Phaksa	(xli) Tonga
(xxviii) Phedangsiri	

The following is the list of some notable gajas with their hereditary leaders of British period :

<i>Sl. No.</i>	<i>Name of Gaja</i>	<i>Name of the head of Gaja</i>
(i)	Rangi	Karna Chandra Talukdar;
(ii)	Baga	Surjya Chandra Talukdar;
(iii)	Baboro	Akhay Muni Talukdar;
(iv)	Laskara	Pancha Ram Talukdar;
(v)	Dhamei	Kamini Mohan Dewan;
(vi)	Phedang siri	Chhikana Talukdar;
(vii)	Kura Kutta	Durga Kinkar Dewan;
(viii)	Barbwa	Bhayrab Chandra Dewan;
(ix)	Mulima	Raj Chandra Dewan;
(x)	Larma	Juva Raj Dewan;

(xi) Henga	Nilo Chandra Dewan;
(xii) Oanza	Indra Jai Dewan;
(xiii) Teya	Obirat Mohan Dewan;
(xiv) Tanya	Krishna Kishore Dewan;
(xv) Khambe	Dushmanta Talukdar.

The Chakma "Chief" collected trade tax from the representatives of the kinship groups. Thus, in the perspective of the Moghul fiscal system, the goza representatives became "dewans" as they were subsequently called; the chiefs repeatedly received grants of land and thus became jagirdars apart from their function as tax collector (tahsildar). From the 1830's onwards, the Chakma chiefs had established their position outside the goza-system so successfully that they started to undermine the very foundations of Chakma society; they expropriated the Chakma jhumias of the common lands and sublet it to the dewans, the number of which had been deliberately increased by the chiefs from 40 to 108 by 1872. The chiefs thus posed as talukdars, sometimes they even claimed zamindar-status and in British time Raja-status.

(Organising Committee Chittagong Hill Tracts Campaign
The Charge of Genocide October 11, 1986, p-36)

As already mentioned that the Chakma Chief used to collect the taxes from the Dewans and Talukdars on a fixed date during the year and these days were marked with festivity and merriment called PUNNAHA. The hill people drew from 2—3 days distance (foot march). The people from the plains also flocked for business. The nobles and the members of the royal family moved around the king. The people thronged the royal court to look at the king. The dancing hall (Nach ghar) in the courtyard was decorated with shomiyana (marque) and the people were happy when the king was on the throne. All sections of the people old, young and children were entertained with fun and the frolic on the occasion.

Marriage

Every society has its own customs of marriage, which is the foundation of the family life. The Chakma society recognises two kinds of marriages; one performed by the religious method by the Buddhist Bhikkhu (Monks) and the other as per the trend system. The customary marriage is gradually being replaced by the religious marriages among the educated people. The customary marriage is more fascinating and interesting, as the whole village community can take part in it. On a young man's attaining above 20 years of age, his parent look for a suitable young girl between 15-18 years of age for bride. On finding a suitable girl of their choice, a male relative of the boy will be sent to the house of the girl. If the negotiation succeed they will fix a date (day) for a meeting of the parents of both the parties. The bride groom's parents should proceed to the would be bride's house taking with them a bottle of wine. Eventually, they will sleep in the future bride's house. After a couple of days the bridegroom's parents will pay a second visit to the bride's house, taking with them a bottle of wine and rice cakes. Again after some days, they would pay the third visit and this time with lots of wine, rice cakes and other eatables. On this occasion they will meticulously discuss the marriage. The girl's parents would ask for some ornaments and bride price and the date of the marriage will also be fixed. On the day preceding marriage, the bride groom's party take with them clothing and jewellery for the bride and groom to the bride's house. The bride will be dressed up with new clothes and jewellery and throughout the night there would be a festive mood in the bride's house. The following day, after the morning meal, the bridegroom's party will escort the bride to the bridegroom's house and in the evening the actual ceremony takes place (it can take place in the day time also and there is no restriction to this). The marriage is consummated with the performance of 'CHUMULONG'. The village ojha (priest) would perform some rituals which would invariably include the head of a slaughtered pig and fowl slaughtered for the occasion. The bride and the bridegroom are made to sit side by side with two relations of both the parties and are bound on

their waist with a new clean cloth which indicated social acceptance of their marriage which is called 'JORABANDHA'. It is performed before a large gathering with the consent of all present. The bride will then put into the mouth of the groom a small quantity of cooked rice and a pan and the same will be repeated by the groom for the bride. Then they will be declared newly married couple. Thereafter, the ojha will predict the future of the couple after examining the tongue of the sacrificial fowl and its other organs. The predictions included are generally :

- (i) Whether the conjugal life would be happy;
- (ii) How many children they will get;
- (iii) Whether the first child would be a male or a female; etc.

The parents would wait anxiously for the dream which would foretell them about their children's future life joy or sufferings.

Ceremonies connected with birth as follows :

When a Chakma woman has been pregnant for five to seven months, the puja of *Gang sala* is performed. During pregnancy the woman is allowed to eat anything she fancies, and special care is taken to carry out her wishes.

When a child is born the husband brings a basketful of earth and spreads it near the bed and lights a fire on it; this fire is not allowed to go out for five day. After this the earth is thrown away, and the mother and the child are bathed in water, to which some medical herbs have been added. The woman is impure for a whole month after child birth and is not allowed to cook during this period. Children are suckled to a considerable age by their mothers.

(Hutchinson, Chittagong Hill Tracts, 1909 : 27)

The Death Ceremonies

The death, funeral ceremony has a very important role in the society. The usual practice is to burn the corpse on the pyre of some selected days in a week. If the deceased belong to a high rank in the society or a wealthy person, then the dead body is taken to the burning ghat with the accompaniment of music in a procession, on a chariot (GARI TANA) and before the starting of the last journey the dead body is given a good bath and put on new clothes. The chariot was to be nicely decorated. After laying the dead body in a wooden box on the chariot, it is to be drawn by *contending* party (pullers) to the accompaniment of great pomp and show. It is believed that the dead body is being carried to his new abode in a majestic form. The idea behind this is that, if the dead person is given a princely send off from the world, he would similarly be received in the world he is to enter. This celebration needs the participation of the whole community. Therefore, the custom is restricted to the rich persons only.

In the case of the ordinary people, especially the jhumia families, if the death occurs during the lean period, then the usual practice is to bury the dead body for a short spell of time till such time the harvest season is over. They purchase all their necessities in life with the jhum harvest. The dead body is exhumated for the last ritual when their economic condition improves after the harvest. Usually, they burn the dead body on the bend of the river where the water is in rapid flow. The head of a deceased, in the case of a man is set in the east and in the case of woman it is set on the reverse direction. In case the death is due to certain virus illness and contagious disease then the dead body is buried to avoid adverse effect to the community.

Having completed the cremation, the following day, some close relatives from the family of the deceased visit the cremation ground in search of foot prints of the deceased (certainly it is impracticable, but in their simple faith they believe that the deceased must leave behind some mark of his new birth).

They also collect some bones of the deceased from the spot and put it in an earthen pot and then immerse it into a river where the water is in swift flow. There are certain religious performances in connection with these rituals. In the ancient time these were performed by the *Ruli system* of a corrupt form of Buddhism, which was prevalent in Burma and Arakan. The Ruli system was strongly prevalent in the Chakma society, but it has no existence now) and presently these are being performed with the help of Bhikkhus. All the sons of the deceased, thereafter are to shave off their hair on the head and then to return home. The observance of mourning in the family is of seven days and during this period the family abstains from eating any animal food or fish. On the seventh day the last ritual of the deceased is performed which is called 'SATKINYA'. On this occasion they will make offerings of food of their dead ancestors upto third or fifth generations. They will hear discourses from the Bhikkhus and the deceased family would make 'DANA' for the sake of the deceased person generously. A ritual is also practised among the well to do families which is called; 'PINDI DAN' some pieces of the bones of the deceased is immersed into the river Niranjana at Budhgaya which is considered to be holiest among all the places in Buddhist religion they believe that without PINDI DAN the soul of the dead person would not be free. However, in Buddhism there is no existence of soul and therefore it is contradictory to their religious philosophy.

CHAPTER III

Pattern of Settlement of Villages and Dwelling Houses

As already described the Chittagong Hill Tracts is divided into 4 major river valleys constituted by its four principal rivers—the Pheni, the Karnaphuli, the Sangu, the Matamuri and their tributaries—and marked by change of hills running from south in a north western direction. The migration of the people through this hill tracts from Arakan to Chittagong Hill Tracts has continued from the past many centuries.

The four river tracts and its valleys were most symbolic for shaping the river civilization. The livelihood of the people were mainly based on cultivation on settled areas as well as jhuming (the jhuming is a system which consists in clearing a patch of forest land setting fire to the fallen jungle and then sowing in the ashes a miscellaneous crop of cotton, rice, pumpkins, and other vegetables, all of which ripen in about 5 months. This is regarded as a primitive system of cultivation). The jhumia families were practically leading a migratory life moving from one jhum land to another jhum land year by year. They build a small hut in the jhum land known as Taung which is a Burmese/Arakanese word. However there were many families who had settled on cultivable lands. According to the

observation by W.W. Hunter in the Imperial Gazetteer of India 1885 p. 449.

“In one point they (Chakmas) differ from all the other hill tribes,—they are very averse to changing the sites of their villages, which are kept from generation to generation at one place, they do not aim at any permanency of structure, the houses being built in the fashion of the hills with bamboos only and roofs thatched with wild jungle leaves/sun grass.

The Chakmas generally build their villages on the bank of a river or near the stream on the slope of a hill. The dwellers of a village generally belong to a particular sept (Gaja) and the descendants of each family live in one group and gradually they develop a social group amongst them. In the society a family is formed based on the marriage of one man to one or to many women, the man wielding absolute power over the whole family. The oldest man become the head of the family in the joint families. The desire of male offspring in particular was the chief aim of their marriage. The main considerations for the performance of the male offspring is because of the fact that they would be able to support their families by engaging in jhum cultivation and other occupation which would require physical labour. Secondly they follow the patriarchal and patrilineal system. The male offspring of a family would built their houses adjacent to one another and they would not permit any other person to build house in between them as they consider it as bad omen (bharbo in chakma).

Their houses are scattered all over the country and they maintained Bhuddhist Monasteries at every concentrate areas where their numbers may be not even more than 30 families. These Monastery boy is known as Kyang Thaga. These two words have come down originally from Burmese and Arakanese language. The description of a Chakma house is given below :

These houses are built entirely of bamboo with a machhan floor raised some six feet above the ground. The house is divided into compartments, and the requirements of the married members of the family

are first attended to. In the event of several families living together, the rooms are apportioned in order of seniority. For instance, in a family of which three members are married, the house will be divided by mat walls into four compartments. The outer one is reserved for the unmarried male members or for the use of visitors, and is called Pinagudi, the next apartment will go to the eldest male representative of the family with his wife, and the third room will be given to youngest married member. Each room averages fifteen feet in length, including the ochalen or back varandah, which is from five feet to seven feet in breadth. When laying out the compartments the house is divided breadth wise, taking the centre or ridge pole of the house as the line of division on which to mark out the family quarters and kitchen. In the front of the house is a varandah which is divided into two by a mat partition for the use of the males and females respectively. In the front of the varandah is a big open space or raised platform, used for various house hold purposes. Small compartments may be erected on this for the storage of grains, cotton, or households effects, but as a rule the grain is stored away from the house for safety in case of fire. The Chakmas now form a settled tribe, and the same village site is occupied from generation to generation. Several of the wealthier headmen have built themselves houses of a permanent nature, but the majority of the tribe are quite content to occupy houses built in the hill fashion, which are eminently suited to the requirements of the country.

(Hutchinson, Chittagong Hill Tracts, 1909 : 25)

In the Chakma villages any kind of crime is rare. The most frequent disputes are of social nature only. Among other important characteristics of the Chakma villages the British writer T.H. Lewin noted in his book 'The Hill Tracts of Chittagong and Dwellers Therein' that :

'The Chakmas allow no songs to be sung in as near

their villages save those of religious character. Love songs they say, demoralize the young girls. In jhum or jungle, however, their tongue is free'.

In the present age, the Chakma villages do not appear to follow this. Contrary to their previous system love songs have become more and more endear to them.

CHAPTER IV

Dress, Ornaments, Food, Drinks, Games and Customary Law

Chakma women folk are the real custodian of maintaining the customary and traditional dress of the Chakmas. The traditional dress of 'dhoti' 'kurta' and headgear of menfolk have already been given up in favour of trousers and shirt (western type).

Dress

The dress of the Chakma womenfolk has two portions;

- (i) The lower part which extends from the hip joint (waist) to the bottom of the ankle (traditional colour black and dark blue) is called 'PINON' and
- (ii) The upper part which is tightly wrapped over the breast is known as 'KHADI'.

Women are skilled in weaving their own dress (Pinon and Khadi). Although at times the women may take fancy to wear different kinds of dresses, but they steadfastly try to maintain their national dress. Their traditional blue and black colour of Pinon has been replaced with interlaced colour weaving which indicates a change in their thinking. Their traditional dress bears the evidence of a civilised culture of an ancient

period. Ornaments were used by the Chakma women. The lists of the ornaments are mentioned below :

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|
| (i) Nak phul | : Nose ornaments; |
| (ii) Kan phul | : Ear ornaments; |
| (iii) Bala Banguri | : Wrist ornament; |
| (iv) Taj jur | : Arm ornament; |
| (v) Thengat kharu | : Ankle ornament; |
| (vi) Aajali, Alchara | : Neck ornament; |
| (vii) Thenka chara | : Necklace with coins
(silver). |

This shows the opulence of the society in which they lived. Their economic condition has gone down in the last few decades and as a result of which many of them have fled to India. They are ekeing a poor existence and losing their culture.

It is really unfortunate that instead of being able to gain a cultural conquest over those pre-literate groups of tribals whose contiguity they gained in Mizoram they themselves lost much of their won culture and became in slow degree even worse in their way of life than those of the tribes around themselves.

(Mrs N. Chatterjee, Puan-The Pride of Mizoram : 1978 : 60)

Food and Drinks

From this account we find that Chakmas are living in danger of losing their identity and facing total extinction. As a result many of them have foresaken their custom and food habits. Many of their native recipes are no longer retained due to the change of geographical area. Some of the Chakma cuisines are mentioned below :

- (i) *Chuma Gudiya* : Fish, vegetables, green chillies, salt, onion, turmeric etc are stuffed into a bamboo piece of 12-16 inches and then kept into the fire of low temperature. This indirect heating system retains the food value.

- (ii) *Kebang* : Here the items are packed into banana leaf and then placed on a very low temperature outside the fire place.
- (iii) *Sidol* : They are very much addicted to sidol (a fish preparation with pungent smell. In Burma it is popularly known as Ngapi).
- (iv) *Rotten Egg* : A rotten egg cuisine is very popular among the Chakmas.
- (v) *Liquor* : They are hard drinkers, and the preparation of liquor thrives like home industry in every family. They usually produce two varieties, very strong called 2-3 chuni (distillation) if it is taken undiluted it burns the throat and the second called 'Jogara' which is sweeter in taste. Drinks are served freely in all major festivals.

The system of eating food is very striking. Ordinarily they would eat food under a roof or inside the room. For the upper class persons they make sitting arrangement on the floor by laying cotton mattress covered with jumma chadar (cloth made out of the cotton produced in the jhum). Ordinarily, they sit on a mat cross legged at the time of eating food. The food plate will be kept on a 'MEJANG' or a low table. This is about 5.6 inch in height with round shape on the top with three supporting legs, made of copper, generally used well to do upper class families (such as the nobility, head man, dewan, talukdar etc). This system was not only confined to the well-to-do families, even the ordinary jhummia families used to maintain it. They would prepare mejang out of bamboo having square size (10-12 Sq. inch on top). This is the culture of ancient Buddhistic era. Another important aspect is that they used 'DABAR' (a container for passing urine at night time). The Dabar was made of copper and it could contain 4-5 litres. This system also bears the mark of an old culture and civilization).

Games

The traditional games played by them are mentioned below:

- (i) *Ghila khara* : There are two types (1) Jham khela and

- (2) Nukruk khela. Only even number of persons can take part in this game.
- (ii) *Nadeng khara* : Any number of person can take part in this game. In this game a conical shape wooden piece is set revolving rapidly.
- (iii) *Pattl khara* : Any number of persons can participate in this game. The main objective in this game to get in touch with the member of the other group within the time one can hold the breath.
- (iv) *Gudu khara* : This game is similar to Kabbadi which is played all over Indian sub-continent.
- (v) *Ball khela* : This game is similar to wrestling.

Musical Instruments

Among, the musical instruments the Singa, Flute, Dhu-duk and Kheng-grong were most popular.

It is seen that many of their characteristics are still in evidence and have not been swept off by winds of change :

It is note worthy that a number of authoritative books are now coming out in Bengali throwing light on the Chakmas and their culture. Materials in these books are based on source written in Chakma language which appears to be a mixture of Burmese and distorted Bengali language. Some of the more important tones of these are 'Genkhuli geetapad' (folklores), 'Chatigan chharapala'—an account of Chakma emigration from Chittagong, 'Gojenlama'—a book written in a mixture of Pali and broken Burmese giving details about social customs pertaining to marriage, death and religious ceremonies of the Chakmas. 'Radharaman Dhanapatir pala' describing incidents of old Chakma families, Baromas—a set of Chakma folklores, Tallik Sastra—a detailed account of medicinal plants, method of preparing medicines with the use thereof as also use of metallic compounds, together with elaborate procedures

for treatment of diseases, Ubageet-love songs and Sadeng Giri Upakhyan—a folklore detailing the life and activities of their old king Sadeng Giri who is described herein as a great ascetic (Yogi). The purpose of giving these details is to bring out the fact that the Chakmas who are now unfortunately found to be very backward, did have a brilliant past even though it has not been possible to establish a dependable chronological account of them. Indeed it is on this account, perhaps, that they are not sometimes considered as tribals by some authorities. But the fact remains that, in spite of such rich cultural heritage they have today lost much of their earlier social and cultural moorings. It is not unlikely that during the process of their long standing migration into different parts as a result of pressures of various types they have relapsed into nomadic ways of living.

(Mrs N. Chatterjee Puan the Pride of Mizoram, 1978 : 59)

The "Gengkhuli" is a kind of ballad Chakma song. It is consisted of the recitation/narration of a story/incident or theme of some past. It is usually not meant as an entertainment programme for an audience. The Gengkhuli is usually sung at night in the presence of limited gathering and it preceeds always with an invocation to an worship to deities.

The Jatra (open theatre) of the epic stories of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata is very popular among the Chakmas and it occupies a very special place in the Chakmas performing arts. They would be dressed on the typical drama dress of glittering colours in the theatre which is usually in Bengali language.

Customary Laws

The society order in villages was maintained by means of traditional custom which has come down from their ancestors. These customary laws which maintained the social structure.

- (i) The system of labelling the mark of possession of anything in the forest is called dhajya-lakkara. The first maker of dhajya-lakkara becomes the owner of it.
- (ii) In the honour of the race, the under mentioned rules are being practised for generations together :
 - (a) Being khsatriyas, we can not do menial job or be slaves or 'golam'. We can not also carry the shoes of others, except of those who are sick and children.
 - (b) Beating drums in public (except war drums) is prohibited.
- (iii) Singing or reng (loud or harsh sound probably used in the war) are prohibited without permission, except on festive occasion, while crossing through the boundary of other's house.
- (iv) It is considered to be bad to enter to other's house without permission by the following categories of persons :
 - (a) Person of a gutted house;
 - (b) Bride in a bridal dress;
 - (c) Parents of son-in-law or daughter-in-law who have not attained purity by performing the ceremony called Kajoi pani.

The punishments are as follows :

- (i) Jarimana : Cash fine;
- (ii) Muchilika : Bond agreement;
- (iii) Marpeet : Physical punishment;
- (iv) Jendhera : In this offender's hair, on the head are cut into three parts and a fowl is hung on the neck and a bamboo is kept on his head. Then, he is escorted by two villagers to every house and on

reaching at the door steps, the offender shall tell his crime and also the punishment awarded to him. The offender shall also attract the attention of the people by making sound with the help of the bamboo broom. If the offender fails to do this the people guarding him are permitted to use force to compel him to do the same. After having paraded through the whole village, the offender would appear before the panchayat where his head shall be shaved off and then he will take a dip into the water (river). After having done this, the offender shall beg mercy of the panchayat. This is called Jendhera.

- (v) Vandala : In this, the offender is to offer food with reverence to all the village elders.
- (vi) Hamo-ladi-Ujane, lamonee garana : In this the victim/woman having taken a bath (with her wet dress on) shall stand putting her legs apart and then the offender shall pass through her legs seven times and each time shall utter Ma (mother).

There are certain customary laws with regard to marriages and these are as follows :

1. Marriages are prohibited between step brother and step sister (off springs out of earlier marriage of both

husband and wife); because the divine bond between them is much greater than any temporal relationship.

- ii. Generally, the girls do not have much say in the selection of their husbands, as it is arranged by the parents. But it is not applicable in the case of widow. However, in the case of child widow; if she is dependent on her guardian then the wishes of the guardian would be binding for her.
- iii. If a young girl runs away with a married person (whose wife is alive), the legal guardian of the girl can refuse to give the girl for marriage, but if she runs away for second time, then the guardian would have to agree for the marriage without the bride price.
- iv. If a married person accepts a second wife then the first wife will have the right to divorce her husband, and she will have right to take away with her all her belongings like ornaments, clothing or she may have right of some special claims.
- v. Any illicit relation between young men and woman would result in payment of fine with pigs, even before the final decision of the jury. The offender will be punished by the jury.
- vi. If one's betrothed runs away with other person, the girls father would not only be liable to return all the expenditures incurred by the boy's party, but would also be liable to face the trial before the local tribal council.
- vii. Those who help the anti-social activities are called ukil (accomplice) and punishment to them is severe.
- viii. The system of ghar jamei is the coming of son-in-law to the bride's house (opposite of sending the bride to the husband's house). It is decided mainly on two factors e.g. if the man is orphan and poor; or the girl's father has only one daughter. The ghar jamei arrangement is generally finalised in the presence of the

relatives of both the parties including the village elders. They decide number of factors like :

- a. the number of years the son-in-law shall have to stay in the father-in-law's house;
 - b. if the son-in-law leaves with his wife without completing the term;
 - c. if he completes the term and at the time of parting what would be his share of items, and other items which may be considered necessary.
- ix. For any illicit relationship between prohibited relationship, the male is punished by jhendra an vendela which has been explained in the punishment section.
 - x. Any sexual contact with the consent or even without consent, if the girl is not matured, it is treated as offence of rape.
 - xi. Any sexual advances to a woman is punishable under the social laws.
 - xii. A gosthi (great family) in male line upto three generations is considered one household for any rituals, called Gudthi Bhat. Beyond five generations it is no more valid.
 - xiii. Re-marriage within seven days on the death of wife or husband is prohibited.

In the Chakma society the Dewans and Talukdars were entrusted with the judicial functions and those cases which were beyond their powers were normally sent to the king. They were also responsible to help the law enforcing authorities in apprehending criminals. The Chakma customary law states :

In case of any epidemic, contagious diseases like Cholera, the Ojhas put the whole village in quarantine and during this period no outsider was permitted to enter into the village. In case, the police suspects that any criminal or deserter to be inside the village during

the isolation period than the police should inform the Karbari who would be responsible to produce the said person to the police.

The 'Ojhas' are both male and female. Those women who are capable of handling delivery cases effectively are also known as 'Ojha'. The male ojhas perform duties of priests at the time of marriage, they are also supposed to be effective in curing diseases, snake bites and vasitations of evil spirits. There are also 'Vaidyas' who are supposed to possess knowledge of the use of roots, leaves and metallic compound. The Chakma people in general held the 'Vaidya' in high esteem. Till date in the villages people prefer to be treated by the vaidyas even if the qualified doctor is available. In fact the vaidyas are like the doctors of herbal medicines and this knowledge is handed down to them from generation to generation. The treatment by the vaidyas has great social acceptance, as it has stood the test of time. This is one of the great cultural heritage of the Chakma society.

CHAPTER V

Religion

Religion, as the etymologg of the word proves, means a tie or bond, but Buddhism possesses but little of this power in Burma. There is a religion underlying and intermingled with Buddhims a religion of Shamanism or Nat—Worship which was the creed of the people before the introduction of Buddhims. Buddhism, instead of displacing, adopted and modified this inimistic worship, and the Buddhism of Burma at the present day is but a thin veneer of philosophy laid over the main structure of Shamanistic belief. Sir William Hunter, in chapter V of volume VII of his Imperial Gazetteer writes.

Buddhism readily coalesced with the pre-existing religion of the primitive races. Thus among the hill Tribes of Eastern Bengal we see the Kyaungthas, children of the river, passing into Buddhism without giving up their aboriginal rites. They still offer rice and fruits and flowers to the spirits of hill and stream, and the Buddhist priest, although condemning the practice as unorthodox do not very violently oppose it.

(H.L. Eales, Census of 1891, Imperial series vol. iv, Burma Report, pp-59).

The above position has been further clarified in the next census report of India, which writes :

The Chittagong Hill Tracts is a professedly Buddhist District, and the inhabitants seen to have adhered to their Buddhism from very ancient times. Their Buddhism is not altogether of the southern school because they have their Temples of Gods and Goddesses.

(H.H. Risley. Census of India, 1091 Vol-1, India part—1 pp-369).

Around 241 B.C the Missionaries first brought over the Southern or Ceylon School of Buddhism (Therovada) in Burma to Talaings of Thaton and thence the Missionaries worked their way northwards into Burma and eastwards into Siam (now Thailand) and the Shan States. It is interesting to note that Thaton Buddhism was largely Hindu. Around 400 A.D. Buddha Ghosa (a Brahmin from Thaton or Buddha Gaya) sailed to Ceylon and transcribed the Buddhist Scripture and brought them back to Thaton. Buddha Ghose translated the wrote the Buddhist canon from Sinhalese into Pali, and he whole of the celebrated works the Visuddhimarga and Atthasalini. The advent of Buddha Ghosa marks an important era in the History of Buddhism in Burma. Although the propagation of Buddhism was continuing, but for many centuries the animistic worship with Buddhism was continuing and it was known as ARI (in Chakma Ruli) Buddhism. The Ari Monks wrote the Pali Sutta in Burmese script according to the law they preached. The TANTRIK Buddhism or Lamaism is greatly mixed up with superstition. The translation of the Pali Suttas by the Rilis in Chakma (Chakma script which is corrupt Burmese) are known as TARAS (a short form of Tantra). Therefore we find the old religious book of the Chakmas AGARTARA which contains in 28 volumes, such as :

<i>Sl. No.</i>	<i>Name of Tara</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
i.	Agar Tara	Religious Sutta.
ii.	Malem Tara	Mongal Sutta (used in social and religious ceremonies).
iii.	Sadeng giri Rara	An account of sadeng giri raja.
iv.	Annicha Tara	Teaching of 'Annitya' human life.
v.	See Mogal Tara	Jay mongal Sutta.
vi.	Doso Parami Tara	It is used in Pindi dan in reverence to a dead person.
vii.	Trikunda Tara	Trikunda Tara.
viii.	Bara Kuruk and Choto Kuruk	It is used in social custom.
ix.	Tallick Shashtra Tara	It is used for medical treatment.
x.	Aristama Tara	It is used in pindi dan in reverence to persons of high rank.
xi.	Raken Ful Tara	It is used in annual reverence to the deceased person.
xii.	Sahas Ful Tare	It is used in social custom.
xiii.	Arinamma Tara	Used in marriage ceremony.
xiv.	Jyon Dharan Tara	Used in social custom.
xv.	Anjina Tara	-do-
xvi.	Pudum Eul Tara	-do-
xvii.	Fudum Ful Tara	-do-
xviii.	Sava diba Tara	-do-
xix.	Cherak Ful Tara	-do-
xx.	Chaneng Ful Tara	-do-
xxi.	Buddha Ful Tara	-do-

xxii. Sak Suttan Tara	Used in Social custom
xxiii. Raja Hora Tara	-do-
xxiv. Sarak Dan Tara	-do-
xxv. Suba dijjya Tara	-do-
xxvi. Sakya Tara	-do-
xxvii. Fakiri Tara	-do-
xxviii. Angara Sutra Tara	-do-

Tara or purification (mother of all Buddhas) refers to Mahayana Buddhism. Therefore, it is clear that the Chakmas were earlier followers of Mahayana. The technic of breathing meditation which they acquired from ancient time has dried up in them.

Some British Scholars view that :

Buddhism readily coalesced with the pre-existing religion of primitive people. Thus among the hill tribes of Eastern Bengal we see the Kyaungthas, children of the river, passing into Buddhism without giving up their aboriginal rites. They still offer rice and fruits and flowers to the spirits of hill and stream; and the Buddhist priests, although condemning the practice as unorthodox, do not violently oppose it (William Hunter, Imperial gazetteer vol—VI).

The British scholars support the view that the Chakmas belong to Kyaungtha race. There are also 1600 devotional songs and poems composed by Shib Charan Chakma. It is called 'GOJENALAMA'. All this indicates their lineage of ancient time to 'MAHAYANA' school of Buddhism. The Mahayanism had fallen out of favour among the Chakmas with the systematised introduction of Therovads Buddhism by the learned Chakma Monks (Bhikkhus). The most prominent among them were (Rajgurus) Bara Mitra Vhikkhu, Jana Ratan Vhikkhu, Pala Dhan Vhikkhu, Anand Vhikkhu, Priya Ratan Vhikkhu etc.

Many great religious Masters have been born in the community and to mention a few are Ven. Aggavensa Mahathero (present Chakma Rajguru), Bana Vante, Bimal Bhikkhu, Pragya Nanda, Dhammalanker, Aajya Lankar, Shilananda, Sundaranand and many others who are devotedly showing the path to religion. In the supreme teaching of Buddha, one must show compassion even to the killer (who kills you), since he would be releasing you from this rotten carcass. Buddhism taught four noble truths; Life is full of suffering a 'vale of tears'—because of illness, ageing, discontent and awareness of death; (2) the cause of this is desire, or attachment to the world in such a way as to become liable to suffering—i.e. desire for sensual pleasure, desire to see an end unpleasantness, desire to go on living, etc; (3) therefore, the way to eliminate suffering is to eliminate desire. (4) The fourth noble truth reveals the way to achieve this removal of desire; and that way is the middle part of the Buddhist discipline; the noble eight-fold path or the middle path. The Chakmas know that they can not purge from the results of their deeds. May be good or bad. This philosophy of life has made their life uncontentious and without much craving. The art of Buddhist way of life has moulded them to avoid the extremes in life. The Buddha image at Chandraghona in Chittagong on the border of CHT is known by name MAHAMUNI. It is believed the name was brought from Arakan where the MAHAMUNI shrine was the oldest in Burma. The city Dha-gnya-wa-ti (on the east and ninety nine on the west of the Ga-tsha-ba river now kolodan in Arakan was reigned by the king Ang-dza-na, the son of king of Kapi-la-wot or Ma-ga-dha) and of this race fifty five kings reigned throughout a period of 1800 years, another dynasty then succeeded which numbered 24 kings, whose reign extended throughout a period of 835 years. Then came the king Tsan-da-thoo-vee-ya who was not of a different dynasty, but his reign the Booth Gau-ta-ma having been born in Magadha visited Arakan; the pious king in honour of him built the famous Temple of Ma-ha-ma-ni, which still exist. The ruins of the ancient Temple of Mahamuns built entirely of stone, the sites of former cities shown by the remains of tanks

and ruined pagodas, the extensive stone walls at the old capital, certainly tall of a more flourishing kingdom than what the British found it. (Harvey British Rule in Burma Vol-10, (part (2) : 1824-712). It is believed the Mahamuni was having the great protective power and it overshadowed the whole of Arakan. (in 1785 the image was taken to Mandalay). The earliest capital founded in 2nd century in the north of Arakan was at DINNWADI not far from Babbooting. We find the growth of an ancient civilization here during the Buddhistic era :

The old city of Arakan, which stands at the head of an inferior branch of the Kuladyne, about 50 miles from Akyab, may be reached from the latter place in two tides by light vessels or boats. The principal creek near the Babbootong hills throws off two branches, which run through the down and are crossed by lofty wooden bridges, a good deal out of repair. On the southern side of the principal street which run east and west, are the ruins of the ancient palace and fort, consisting of a triple square enclosure of stone and brick wall, well cemented with lime; the stone having apparently been originally employed in the construction and the subsequent repairs effected with bricks; the works all together is of considerable extent; and the labour bestowed in connecting the different detached hills by curtain of stones and brick walls, must have been immense. They are now, however, in a most delapidated state, and as sites more favourably situated have been selected for occupation by the civil and military authorities of the province, it can never be an object of importance to repair these works. The inhabitants of the town may be estimated at from eight to ten thousand, and they consist principally of old families of respectability, who continue attached to the spot from local associations (R.B. Pemberton, report on the Frontier of British India, p-93, published by the Govt. of Assam Deptt. of Historical and Antiquarian students).

It is confirmed historically that the Chakmas crossed over to CHT from Arakan and were constantly maintaining their religion in which they were born. Their ancient rituals are as follows :

Thanmana Puja : The literary meaning is the worship of the place. The whole village will take part in it and it involves animal sacrifices. The place for its celebration is usually on the bank of the river or on the bend of stream. The main purpose is for the well being for the whole village.

Bhatya Puja : It is performed to know the transmigration from the previous birth. The people of the family of the three generations are required to participate in the celebration. Therefore it involves huge arrangement and expenditure. This has become absolute.

Bur Para Puja : This is performed for the purity and the well being of the family. This is still practised with great devotion and faith. This is generally performed on the bank of the river.

Ma Lakhi Puja : In Sanskrit it is pronounced *Lakshmi*. It is considered as Goddess of harvest and wealth. It is performed in every household every year generally after the harvest.

Gang Puja Their simple belief in the river goddess and they worship river goddess for protection from all kinds of accidents the Gang Puja is most compatible with them.

As already stated the Hindu deities and the northern school of Buddhism, had influenced the religion of the people living in this tract (region), before the southern school of Buddhism was introduced. Also, their contact with Hindus in the adjacent part of Bengal, helped to mould their religion in the present form. They even came under the influence of Vaishnavism (one sect of Hinduism) in the middle of 19th

century and some of them took vow of abstinence from animal food and strong drinks.

The Buddha Monastery is called KYAUNG (Burmese word) by Chakmas. The monastery boy is known as KYAUNG THAGA. In the Chakma society it is the usual custom to take vow in the triple Gems (BUDDHA, DHUMMA, SANGHA) if only for a few days in one's life (the most suitable age when a boy attains puberty. At that time one has to shave off hair on the head and wear yellow saffron dress and live as a disciple of Buddha in the monastery. The Buddha Purnima (birth, death and enlightenment on the same day) the full moon day which generally falls in the month of May every year is celebrated with great reverence. On this day, they renew their greatest festival is called BISHU (new year day according to the Bengali calendar) which is celebrated for continuously three days (one day proceeding the new year. New year and the day after the new year known FUL BISHU, MUL BISHU and GARJYA and PARJYA).

An extract from the Census of India, 1901, vol I, India part I H.H. Risley, pp-403 – Chakma (religion).

The Chakmas profess to be Buddhist, but during the last generation or so, their practice in matters of religion has been noticeably coloured by contact with the Hinduism of Eastern Bengal. This tendency was encouraged by the example of Raja Dharm Baksh Khan and his wife Kalindi Rani, who observed the Hindu festivals, consulted Hindu astrologers, kept a Chittagong Brahman to supervise the daily worship of the goddess Kali, and persuaded themselves that they were lineal representatives of the Kshatriya caste. Some years ago, however a celebrated phoongyee came over from Arakan after the Raja's death to endeavour to strengthen the cause of Buddhism and to take the Rani to task for her leanings towards idolatry. His efforts are said to have met with some success, and the Rani is believed to have formally proclaimed her adhesion to Buddhism.

Lakshmi is worshipped by the Tungjainya sub-tribe as the Goddess of harvest in a small bamboo but set apart for this purpose. She is represented by a rude block of stone with seven skeins of cotton bound seven times round it. The offerings are pigs and fowls, which are afterwards eaten by the votaries. Chakmas observe the same worship with a few differences of detail, which need not to be noticed here.

Vestiges of the primitive Animism which we may believe to have been the religion of the Chakmas before their conversion to Buddhism, still survive in the festival called Shongbasa when nats, or the spirit of wood and stream are worshipped, either by the votary himself or by an exorcist (ojha or naichhura), who is called in to perform the necessary ceremonies. The demons of Cholera, fever, and other diseases are propitiated in a river-bed or in the thick jungle, where spirits delight to dwell, with offerings of goats, fowls, ducks, pigeons and flowers. The regular priests have nothing to do with this ritual, which has been condemned as unorthodox.

CHAPTER VI

Language

It is an universally accepted fact that the language of a community is determined by the socio culture environment. That is words in use, the tone, the way, the sentences are formed and the like are to a very great extent influenced by the situation in which that particular language is used. Quite obviously the tone of the language of Chakmas still reflects the traces of their ancient past and the process of their evolution. A civilisation evolves when there is a meeting of different cultures. This is particularly true for situations where there is a merger of communities. It is by now clear that this race has continuously merged with other ethnic groups for centuries and it qualifies now to be called a hybrid race. This struggle for survival saw that community abandoned learning its own language. We learned from Hutchison that from 1869 the community had no opportunity to teach their children their language in the schools but had to continue education through the medium of English and Bengali.

At the later period the school was divided into a Burmese class and a Chakma class. In the former Burmese, English and Bengali were taught, but in the latter only English and Bengali. In 1869 the school was transferred to Rangamati and the designation was changed into Rangamati Govt. Boarding School.

Bengali was the court language and is more or less understood throughout the hill tracts; Maghi is a dialect of Arakanese written in Burmese characters; Chakma is a dialect of Bengali written in corrupt Burmese character.

(R.H.S. Hutchison, Chittagong Hill Tracts 1909: 18).

The quotation brings out two very important aspects about the problems which the Chakmas faced. It was considered as a dialect of Bengali, which technically means a variant of the mother language. In fact the roots of the script, sound system, grammars and lexical system brings this out clearly. Secondly, whereas others were taught their mother tongue the Chakmas were not. It is indeed surprising that the language has managed to survive in spite of all these.

The neglect saw a slow but steady erosion of the language and the culture to be replaced by that of Bengali language and culture. Chakmas today assimilated much of the Bengali way of life. However even today the Chakmas used many words of non-sanskrit origin in their daily life.

Most probably these words have come down from their original language carried from the collective memory of the race passed on from generation to generation. These are the decisive elements which saw the separate root of the language.

The cursive style of the Chakmas script belongs to the group of Paliava alphabets of Indian origin. There was no indigeneous script in the Burmese language. The script brought from India in the 5th century by the Buddhist religious teachers to Burma was adopted as the Burmese script. Their religious books (Tasas) are written in their own script but the language is not as old as their script. The following list of some Chakma words alongwith their Bengali and Burmese equivalents show some very interesting points. It is obvious that the Burmese and Chakma have no similarity. However, even with Bengali though there are some clear similarities in words like "Aaju" quite a few words like "Aalak" show that the roots of the two languages are quite different and it is difficult to accept the fact that one has evolved from the other.

<i>Sl. No.</i>	<i>Chakma</i>	<i>Bengali</i>	<i>Burmese</i>	<i>English</i>
1.	Baba	Baba	Phe Phc	Father
2.	Ma	Ma	May May	Mother
3.	Bown	Bown	Ngimah/Aqmah	Sister
4.	Aaju	Dadu	Aspho	Grant father
5.	Bhuji	Boudi	Aadow	Sister-in-law
6.	Bowjang	Kharap	Soctaw	Bad
7.	Gaawm	Bhalo	Kawngtaw	Good
8.	Zeengyani	Jiban	Ateh	Life
9.	Garba	Awthiti	Lunge	Guest
10.	Jhaadi	Taratari	Myan Myan	Quick
11.	Laare	Aste-Aste	Phi Phi	Slow
12.	Jure	Thanda	Auetaw	Cold
13.	Jaguluk	Jhamela	Pibi	Complicated
14.	Chigon	Choto	Ne Ne	Little
15.	Aalak	Uchu	Myinttaw	High

16.	Sudam	Niyam	Paleh	Custom
17.	Pathru-tru	Dhanyabad	Chezu	Thanks
18.	Fak Fakjya	Sida Sadha	Sin-Sin-Lin-Lin	Frank
19.	Sadar	Ghanista	Shewmyo Zincha	Closet related
20.	Neik	Swami	Lin	Husband
21.	Mowk	Stri	Maya	Wife
22.	Aadam	Gram	Zua	Village
23.	Dowl	Sundar	Hlahtaw	Beautiful
24.	Dangu/Tung	Khoka	Maung Mung	Pat Names for males
25.	Chhikabi/Chitti/ Paran-no	Khuku	Ngimah	Pat names for females

From the above it is quite clear that the Chakma language only not have similarity either with Bengali or with Burmese language. The few similarities had come up as a result of the process of assimilation arising from proximity. Unfortunately, it has in spite of its existence failed to receive a recognition as a district language due to it. According to modern linguists, every language has the potential to fulfil all the functions necessary for the said, using it. No language, therefore, is less capable than another. Unfortunately the Chakma language has not remained as a living language due to policies of Government, lack of political will and adequate patronisation from appropriate quarters. No serious study has also been taken up by any institution to trace out the origins of the Chakma language. It has inadvertently been identified as a dialect of Bengali.

GRAMMER AND SYNTAX OF CHAKMA LANGUAGE

Sentence Structure

The following sentences may be noted :

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Predicate</i>	
Mui	Baat	Khem (I want to eat rice)
Aami	Na	Jebang (we won't go)
Tui	Kudu	Jebe (where are you going)

In the following sentences the subject "You" is omitted :

Duar	Khul (open the door)
Baat	Kha (eat rice)
Idu	Aai (Come here)
Amatun	Divapua (we have two sons)
To babe	Lunglei jeye (your father has gone to Lunglei)
Te	Najabo (He will not go)
Ami	Pherat jeebong (we will return)

Use of Verb

Present

Singular	Mui agong	Tui agas	Te aage
	(I am)	(you are)	(He is)
Plural	Ami aagi	Tumi aaga	Tere aagan
	(we are)	(you are)	(they are)

Past

Singular	Mui alung	Tui ale	Te aale
	(I was)	(You are)	(He was)
Plural	Ami aalang	Tumi aala	Tara aalag
	(We were)	(You were)	(They were)

Future

Singular	Mui emm	Tui ebe	(Te eba)
	(I will)	(You will)	(They will)
Plural	Ami ebong	Tumi eba	Tara ebag
	(We will)	(You will)	(They will)

Present indefinite Mui jang (I go)

Present continuous Mui jangar (I am going)

Present perfect
continuous Mui jeong (I have gone)

List of Verbs

<i>Chakma</i>	<i>English</i>
Lunggai	Arrive
Gara	Do
Pinei	Put on
Bachak	Wait

List of Pronouns

<i>In Chakma</i>	<i>In English</i>
Mui	I, me
Aami	We, us
Mawr	Mine, myself
Aamer	Ours
Tui, Tumi	You
Tar, Tamer	Yours
Te	He, She
Tar	His, Hers, Yourself
Iaan	It
Kan-na	Who
Ki	What
Kun	Which
Kaar	Whose
Kara	Whom
Tara dei	Themselves

Genders

<i>Masculine</i>	<i>Feminine</i>
Marad (boy)	Mila (Girl, Women)
Nel (husband)	Moog (Wife)
Jamei (bridegroom)	Bo (bride)
Soor (father-in-law)	Soore (mother-in-law)
Bab (father)	Ma (mother)
Marad pua (son)	Mila pua (daughter)
Aaju (grandfather)	Nanu (Grandmother)
Chela Garu/Mala Garu (oxe)	Guru (cow)

There are certain words which are used both in Masculine and Faminine like Pua (child), Manus (person) etc.

Numbers

Singular Number

Bada (egg)
Duar (door)
Haat (hand)
Deen (day)
Beelei (cat)
Pua (child)
Chilum (dress)
Peek (bird)
Thang (leg)
Path (road)

Plural Number

Cadagum (eggs)
Duarani (doors)
Haatani (hands)
Deenun (days)
Beeleigum (cats)
Puaagum (children)
Chilumum (dresses)
Peekum (birds)
Thangani (legs)
Pathani (roads)

Adjective

Positive

Meeda (sweet)

Dool (preety)

Dhaghar (big)

Bura (old)

Algi (lazi)

Comparative

Bharimeeda

Bharidool

Bharibura

Bharibura

Bharialgi

Superlative

Begkunatum
Bejmeeda

Begkunatun
Bejdool

Begkunatun
Bejdthaghar

Begkunatun
Bejbura

Begkunatun
Bejalgi

Some words can be used both in adjective and verbs.

*Adjective**Verb*

Naran (soft)	Narangara (soften)
Pagab (mad)	Pagalgara (madden)
Macha-chanya (fishy)	Machandra (fishing)
Suyad (tasteful)	Suyadya (tasty)

List of Some Prepositions*Chakma**English*

Samare	With
Mui ta samare jeem	I will go with you
Ugure	Up
Ugure ja	Go up
Tale	Under
Table-o tale	Below the table
Dara	By
Ma dara na aba	Cannot be done by me
Aage	Before
Te aage jai	He goes before me
Kai/idu	Near
Te ma kai	He is near me
Sere	Between
Te ama sere	He is between us
Ot, rat, lot	To

List of some Adverbs*Chakma**English*

Jadhi-jadhi	Quickly
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Lara-lare	Slowly
Gagang-gagang	Hoping
Jagardi	Loudly

List of Some Peculiar Words

<i>Chakma</i>	<i>English</i>
Chuma-chumi	Narrow
Jadepade	Definitely
Songgari	Equally
Gangari	Sincerely
Kojpeinei	Lovingly
Seinci	Knowingly
Kajuli	Solicid earnestly
Ujugari	Making straight

There are 33 alphabets in the Chakma language according to Gogenalama by Sib Charan. Out of these 12 alphabets are used to make speech sound and they are called 'bara-matra'. The alphabets and the symbols are shown below :

				
ki	kha	ga	gha	na
				
cha (ed)	ekha	ja	jha	na
				
lo	fha	do	dha	na
				
la	tha	da	dha	na
				
pa	pha	ba	bha	ma
				
ya	ra	la	wa	sha
				
va	sha	na		

Symbols		Pronunciation	
1	1	Over the Consonant	—a
2	—	do	á
3	6	Before the Consonant	e
4	0	Over the Consonant	i
5	⊙	do	ii
6	9	Below the Consonant	u
7	99	do	uu
8	0'	Over the Consonant	o
9	⊙'	do	oo
10	•	do	ang
11	••	do	aw
12	∪	do	ng
13	∫	Below the Consonant	t
14	✓	do	ya
15	2	do	raw
16	2(2)	do	L
17	æ	do	Na
18	∞	do	ha
19	2	do	yaa

List of Vowels

<i>Chakma</i>	<i>Alphabets</i>	<i>Chakma pronounciation</i>	<i>English form</i>
1	ᱠ	Talmua—A	a
2	ᱡ	Aubartulya—A	ā
3	ᱢ	A bannya—E	e
4	ᱣ	A bannei pbudo dilya—EE	ee
5	ᱤ	Ektandya—U	u
6	ᱥ	Deetandya—U	uu
7	ᱦ	Lejubho—E	ea
8	ᱧ	Deel banya—AI	aai
9	ᱨ	Ekha dih—dhel lya—O	O
10	ᱩ	Dwi adih-dhel-diliy—OU	ou (oou)
11	ᱪ	Ek Phudo diley—ANG	ang
12	ᱫ	Dwi phudo diley—AH	ah

<i>Chakma alphabets</i>	<i>Chakma pronunciation</i>	<i>English form</i>
13 	Chan phuo diley—A ANG	There is no proper pronounciation in English. It is like in Bengali language D/in phonatic transcription.
14 	Dhel dya—I	
15 	Bachi—U	u
16 	Tandya—U	u
17 	Dwi tandya—UU	uu
18 	Ekar dile—E	e
19 	Dhel Bangya—AI	ai

Note : The most important point to notice in this alphabets is that the vowel inherent in each consonant is, not a nasiother Indian languages, but ā,

List of numerals

In chakma scripts	chakma numerals	English numerals
১	১	1
২	২	2
৩	৩	3
৪	৪	4
৫	৫	5
৬	৬	6
৭	৭	7
৮	৮	8
৯	৯	9
১০	১০	10

CHAPTER VII

Problems of Survival and Development in Historical Perspective

Chittagong Hill Tracts has a chequered history. There is no clear mention of the Chakma tribe in the history prior to Moghul period. It is a historical fact that they were swamping gradually in this tract from Arakan. The first contact as recorded in the history states that.

In 1713 Jalal Khan on payment of a tribute in cotton obtained permission from Farrukshah for the traders of the lowlands to trade with the hill people. This tribute appears to have been irregularly paid, but the agreement was renewed in 1737 by Shermust Khan, who in addition received a grant of waste land in the Chittagong District for which separate revenue was paid.

(Chittagong Hill Tracts, R.H. SNEYD HUTCHINSON 1909, p. 24)

History refers the Jalalkhan being the Chakma chief. In 1760 A.D. Chittagong change hands from the Moghuls to the East India Company by a pact concluded between Mir Kasem Khan, Nowab of Bengal and the British. In 1763 A.D. the

Chief of Chittagong (Henry Verelst) proclaimed the jurisdiction of the Chakma Chief Shermust Khan.

"All the hills from the Pheni river to the Sangu, and from Nizampar Road to the hills of the Kuki Raja. From 1763 A.D. to 1791 A.D. (28 years) the British rulers were satisfied with the jhum tax alone from the Chakma Chief and the Chief was allowed to retain the full authority in respect of its jurisdiction. However, the period was not very peaceful. In 1776 A.D. Sher Daulat Khan withheld the revenue and his general Ronu Khan began to plunder shops at Rangonea (on the border of Chittagong on the bank of the river Karnaphuli). The authorities tried to capture him between 1777 and 1780, but without success. In 1782 Sher Daulat was succeeded by Jan Kaksh Khan, who made a pretence of paying his revenue, but also encouraged raids on the plain people. In 1787 he sought and obtained pardon from the Governor General and entered into an agreement to keep the peace in the countries bordering on the hill tracts.

(R.H. Sneyd Hutchinson, Chittagong Hill Tracts, 1909 : 22)

After Sher Daulat Khan, Dharam Baksh Khan (1811-1830 A.D.) became the Chakma King. His period ended peacefully and during this period people could gain wealth and became prosperous. It is said wealthy families had to carry their riches with the help of country boats. The Chakma Chief was independent in the management of all internal matters under his jurisdiction. By the end of the 18th century the Chakma chief acknowledged the supremacy of the British Government and was being paying tribute to the Collector of Chittagong. The hill tribes living in Chittagong Hill Tracts had constantly been subjected to raids from the independent tribes living farther eastwards and in consequence of an attack on a stockade situated on the Kaptai river, a tributary of the Karnaphuli, the Commissioner in 1859 recommended the removal of the Chittagong Hill Tracts from the regulation

District, and the appointment of a superintendent over the Hill Tribes. Both these recommendations were adopted and by Act xxii of 1860, which came into operation on the 1st August of that year. The British Government considered its legal responsibility for the protection of the inhabitants of Chittagong Hill Tracts against the murderous raids. Except for fearing the raids from the distant tribes the people in Chittagong Hill Tracts were in great peace and harmony. Following the Act xxii, the hill area became known, 'The Hill Tracts of Chittagong' and was divided into three circles on the basis of principle of different tribes living in Chittagong Hill Tracts. The following were the three circles :

- (1) Chakma Circle with Headquarter at Rangamati ;
- (2) Bohmang Circle with Headquarter at Bandarban and
- (3) Mong Circle with Headquarter at Maniksuri.

The power of seat of the Chakma Chief at that time was at Chandroghana at the periphery of Chittagong regular District. The British Government insisted the Chakma Chief to shift from Chandroghana to Rangamati inside the Chittagong Hill Tracts to gear the control of distant border areas from raids. This has also helped the British Government to establish the British rule at Rangamati by appointing a British Superintendent for the hills.

It is now quite clear that the Chakmas were the followers of the hereditary monarchy system. The Moghul rulers of Bengal and the British Colonial rulers acknowledged the suzerainty of the Chakma King. They also appreciated the good administrative system of the king.

At the time of partition of Indian dominion in August, 1947, 98.5 percent of Chittagong Hill Tracts were tribals and Buddhist by religion and the remaining 1.5 percent were people from plains who either Muslims or Hindus. Although, Islam was nowhere near the corner of Chittagong Hill Tracts, in spite of this fact Chittagong Hill Tracts was awarded to

Pakistan and the faith of the Buddhist tribals were put with the Muslims only to be vanquished in no time. Therefore, the flow out of population from Chittagong Hill Tracts, begun from 1947 since the repression on the hill Buddhist tribals was conspired. The history of the Chakma people and other tribal minorities upto today in Chittagong Hill Tracts is one of repression, torture and killing.

According to the India Partition Act, the Chittagong Hill Tracts was to remain with India (the partition plan was on the basis of Hindu and Muslim religions) but the unexpected declaration of the Radcliffe Boundary Commission on 16th August awarding the Chittagong Hill Tracts to Pakistan (Pakistan's independence was declared on 14th August and India's independence was declared on 15th August 1947) was sounded as the death knell for the Chakmas. On the 15th August, India's Independence Day the Indian flag was hoisted at Rangamati, the Headquarter of the Chittagong Hill Tracts and on August 21, after five days the Indian flag was pulled down by the Pakistani Army. No specific reasons have been written by the Boundary Commission for taking such unethical decisions. The Research Scholars have attributed reasons for such a decision as under :

- (i) As a consequence of Ferozepur being a Muslim majority area (in Punjab), it was to belong to Pakistan. In the Ferozepur and Zira sub-division, however, there were compact Sikh communities. When the award was finally published on the 17th August, contrary to the principle of the Partition Act, both the sub-divisions had been awarded to India. As a result of this, Pakistan had lost something in the west wing, which had to be compensated by some concession to the Muslims in the east wing by awarding Chittagong Hill Tracts to Pakistan.
- (ii) The sea port of Calcutta being a Hindu majority area, it went to India and Chittagong went to Pakistan on the same analogy along with the hinterland Chittagong Hill Tracts which was not Muslim majority area. This

may be in exchange of Murshidabad District in West-Bengal which was to go to Pakistan due to its Muslim majority, but it went to India, as the holy Ganges passes through this district.

Therefore, the fate of Buddhist Chakma tribals of Chittagong Hill Tracts was sacrificed in a treacherous appeasement plan put forward by the shrewd representative of dominating communities at that time. The tribals registered their protest against this decision. A delegation which included the Bohmang and the Mang Chief and the younger brother of the Chakma Chief representing him along with some senior members of the society went to Delhi to explain to Nehru that the Buddhist could never join the Islamic nation. They were assured that the Radcliffe Commission would respect their views but soon their fate turned wrongly without any ethic Chittagong Hill Tracts was declared in Pakistan. Some student leaders of Chittagong Hill Tracts made an attempt to flog a dead horse, but the Pakistani Government despatched army to take stern measures, as a result of which many students had to flee to India which was the first Chakma exodus since Independence and the plight of the Chakmas under the Islamic rule had just begun. The Pakistani Government was determined to do away with all the provisions of the safeguards which were handed down from the British Government. Aiming towards this the Pakistani Government first of all in 1948, replaced the Chittagong Hill Tracts Frontier Police Regulation III of 1881, by the East Pakistan Police Act which paved the way for the non-tribals to take up Police jobs. This legislation deprived the tribals from the job priority in the Government. Secondly, the Government planned to convert Chittagong Hill Tracts into a Muslim Majority area and systematically planned the settlement of Muslim families in Chittagong Hill Tracts. Hundreds of Muslim families were brought from outside and were settled in the areas belonging to the tribals in Chengi and Kasolong valley in the early fifties to which the Buddhist tribals registered their fierce protest against this and as a result the Government temporarily suspended the Muslim settlement programme but did not withdraw the Muslim families who had

already entered into the excluded area of Chittagong Hill Tracts (In the first Constitution of Pakistan which was adopted in 1956, the provision of the excluded area status of Chittagong Hill Tracts was retained, but the Government's action were in contravention of this provision).

In 1960, the Chittagong Hill Tracts Regulation Act, 1900 which for the people from the plains (non-resident) the Chittagong Hill Tracts out of bounds, was abolished. In other words the Chittagong Hill Tracts lost the status of Autonomous status area. The most significant impact on the Chittagong Hill Tracts with its inclusion in Pakistan had come through the bureaucratic machinery who became intolerant of the local powers enjoyed by the tribal chiefs under the British system of administration which was inherited by the Pakistan Government. The Government officials from the plains were alien to the socially determined Buddhist pattern and traditions. Moreover, they were not fairly acquainted with the religious, cultural, ethnic graphic geographical, economic and political diversity of the Chittagong Hill Tracts. It resulted in fading away of the civil justice as the Muslims interfered with the social and religious life of the people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, For example :

In 1953, the Chakma Chief, Raja Tridiv Roy, was mobbed by the Government-backed Bengalis while administering justice in his royal court in his capacity as a Magistrate. In spite of the personal intervention of the then British Deputy Commissioner, Lt. Col. John Angus Hume, OBE, he was arrested and humiliated by the Bengali police. The Chakma Chief fulfils a role similar to that of the British Constitutional monarch. He would have been killed without the intervention of Col. Hume.

(Extracted from the Appeal to the UNO Working Group on indigenous populations on 1st August, 1984 by A.V. Mahathero).

The Pakistan Government was very keen to generate de-tribalisation in Chittagong Hill Tracts in the shortest time and initiated an evil and fierce plan of constructing a Hydro-Electric dam on the pretext of modernisation and development. In 1960, together with the programme of settlement of Muslims, Government pursued the policy of establishing mega industrial project like Papermills and Hydro Electric at Kaptai with all the promise for development. In fact, in the wake of these developments, it only created employment opportunities for the plain people in Chittagong Hill Tracts and Muslim population in large numbers swamped over Chittagong Hill Tracts and swiftly out numbered the local tribals. There was no employment opportunities for the tribals even for petty jobs not to speak of white colour job. On the other hand the high level mark of the dam inundated a vast area of settled cultivation of more than 20,000 families and uprooted more than one lakh people. It resulted in destruction of the traditionally determined pattern of living and the centuries old way of life of the tribals in Chittagong Hill Tracts. The industrial modernisation has taken away the only life they knew for centuries together. Their ethos and personal economy were shattered. Their royal possessions and the legacy of centuries together went down into the bottom of the reservoir water of the dam. The mechanism of the living in Chittagong Hill Tracts had changed completely in the new condition, but the Government did not attempt to train the tribals to adopt new professions. Along with the dam lines many ancillary industries grew up which only encouraged more swamping Muslims from the plains into Chittagong Hill Tracts. The Government did not even launch proper rehabilitation programme for the uprooted and dispossessed families and the rate of compensation provided to them was extremely low i.e. :

- (i) A class cultivable land @ Rs. 6,000/- per acre;
- (ii) B class cultivable land @ Rs. 4,000/- per acre;
- (iii) C class cultivable land @ Rs. 2,000/- per acre;

(Extract from the Pamphlet *An Account of Chittagong Hill*

Tracts published by the Jana Sanghati Samiti on 14th July, 1992).

It clearly indicates that they were let off lightly; without any adequate compensation or rehabilitation. The uprooted people soon became unable to sustain life as their earning had greatly fallen down and there was no second profession to which they could fall back. Their produce from cultivation had greatly reduced as they had to give up fertile land for forest and dry land. They started facing economic hardships and became poverty stricken. On top of it, the increased Muslim pressure encouraged by the Government disillusioned them. Being unable to sustain life and keep alive, finally a group of more than forty thousand people, mostly Chakmas crossed over to India in 1962-63, through the borders of Mizoram and later shifted to Arunachal Pradesh. The area vacated by this exodus was immediately occupied by a new batch of Muslims settlers of more than 600 families. With a view to regularise the settlement of Muslim families in Chittagong Hill Tracts, the National Assembly of Pakistan amended the Constitution in 1953, removing the tribe area status of Chittagong Hill Tracts. Again in 1963, another constitutional amendment bill was introduced for deleting the Excluded Area status of Chittagong Hill Tracts and the people of Chittagong Hill Tracts registered their protest against such oppressive plans. Under such pressures, the Government restored the CHT Regulation Act of 1890, but it served little purpose with the withdrawal of the Excluded area status of CHT. The tribal police force was disbanded, all tribal officials were transferred and all branches of the district administration earlier run by the tribal themselves were brought under the control of non-tribal officials. All these resulted in creating a deadly hostile situation and the Buddhist Tribals became apprehensive of more vicious situation in the future. This prompted them to mobilize the youths and some associations were formed like Tribal Students Association, CHT Tribal Welfare Association, Parbatta Chattagram Nibbanchan Samity Parbatya Bhikkhu Samgha and some others. However, the Jana Samiti was the foremost political party of

CHT which was formed in 1945. The Pakistan Government was very doubtful about the activities of this party and many of its members were arrested in 1948; and thereafter it could not make head way and soon broke up. Meanwhile, a special task force was set up by the Pakistan government to press a steam roller to bring detribalization and annihilation of tribals in CHT. The over all condition of East Pakistan was in disarray, as the people of both the wings, Pakistan (east and west) were not in harmonious relations from the time of its birth in 1947. In reality both the Pakistan (east and west) were very different and apart from the Islam religion there was nothing common shared by the two wings. Therefore a separation was brewing on, all these years and ultimately on the language issue the two wings had proceeded to separation, into two nations. The language Urdu spoken in the west Pakistan was not understandable by the majority of the people in the East Pakistan. In spite of this fact, Pakistan Government adopted Urdu as the national language of Pakistan. This led of language movement in East Bengal and the Pakistan Government wanted to crush the movement by force and many lives were lost. The Awami League under the leadership of Seikh Mujibur Rahman was the leading political party in the forefront in East Bengal at that time. The general election in the undivided Pakistan was held for the last time in 1970 and the Awami League was voted to power to form the Government in the Pakistan's Parliament and also in the Provincial Assembly, but the Martial law regime in Pakistan refused to bow to the verdict of the election results. The Awami League advocated for decentralisation of power and the party's minimum demand was set for self Autonomy for East Pakistan, but the Martial law rulers and the political masters who were controlling the string behind the screen in the west Pakistan were not agreeable to this demand through the democratic process the party finally made declaration of independence of East Bengal on 25th March, 1971. Consequent to this a civil war broke out in East Pakistan and military deployment was made all over.

The Chakma Chief who was elected to the Parliament was whisked away to the west Pakistan by the Army. In the State Assembly (east Pakistan) two tribal leaders Manabendra Narayan Larma and Mung Chuge Pru Chawdhury (Bohmang Chief) from CHT were elected. The hill people maintained solidarity with the Government as they wanted to avoid the brunt of the military attack in CHT. Meanwhile, Mujibur Rahman, President of the Awami League was arrested and a full fledged war for Independence began rising between the liberation force (Mukti Bhahini) Bangladesh and Pakistan Army. Many thousand people crossed over and took refuge in India and it became a mountainous burden for India and ultimately India had to lend support to Bangladesh. Finally, India was plunged into the war with Pakistan and the Indian security forces marched through the borders of Tripura and Mizoram to join the Mukti Bhahini. At that time the hill people of Chittagong Hill Tracts came forward to help the security forces as guide and torch of light in the unknown hilly tracts. Infact, India's participation in the war of Independence boosted up the morale of the hill people of CHT and thousands of them fought along with Bengali forces against the Pakistani Army with the hope that their condition would improve in independence of Bangladesh. But contrary to their expectations, when Pakistani army was withdrawn from Pansuri, the Bangladesh Mukti Bhahini killed 18 hill men who came out to receive them. The Mukti Bahini plundered the area and murdered another 16 men in the same area. Following this, on December 14, 1971 Bengali soldiers killed 21 tribals and burnt more than 200 houses at Kukichara. Immediately after the withdrawal of Pakistani Army (since December 1971, Bangladesh became a new independent country). Mukti Bahini, and Ansars (Islamic guards) raided the tribal villages and carried out indiscriminate killing and the total extermination could be protected owing to the Indian Army's timely intervention. The major incidents of massacre, killing, on tribal villages in CHT in the last one decade are as follows (1971-1983).

- 1971 : Pansuri (P.S. Pansuri), Kukichara (P.S. Khagarachari), Tarabania (P.S. Dighinala), Dhalya (P.S. Manekchhari) etc.
- 1972 : Bairagibazar (P.S. Digninala), Chikanchari (P.S. Ramgarh), Manikchhari (P.S. Ramgarah), Sangupara (P.S. Ramgarah), Pannamura (P.S. Ramgarah), Machyachara (P.S. Mahalchhari). etc.
- 1977 : Matiranga (P.S. Ramgarah), Guimara (P.S. Ramgarah), Manikchhari (P.S. Ramgarah), Laksmichari (P.S. Ramgarah), Hnasa (P.S. Bandarban), Bagmara (P.S. Bandarban), Udalbanya (P.S. Bandarban), Paikheng (P.S. Bandarban), Rajbila (P.S. Bandarban), Bangaldalya (P.S. Bandarban), etc.
- 1978 : Madhu (P.S. Bandarban), Thanchi (P.S. Bandarban), Bandarban (P.S. Bandarban), All villages on the eastern bank of river Ichamati, Rangapani (P.S. Rangamati) etc.
- 1979 : Again all villages on the eastern bank of the river Ichamati, Dumdumya Mouza, Pansuri Mouza, Pujgang (P.S. Khagarachari), Logang (P.S. Khagarachari), Gargajyachari (P.S. Gargajyachari), Babuchara (P.S. Dhighinala), Udalbagan (P.S. Khagarachari), Khagarachari and Khabangpuria, Durgachara (P.S. Khagarachari), Rangamati (H.Q. of CHT), Madhu and Thanchi, Mahalchhari (P.S. Mahalchhari), Lanadu (P.S. Lanadu) etc.
- 1980 : Matiranga (P.S. Matiranga), Kasyabil (P.S. Kaptai), Betbanya, Ghilachari, Chotamahaprum, Chaudhuri-para, Baghaichari, Hazachari, Harina (P.S. Barkal) etc.
- 1981 : Matiranga, Belchhari, Tabalchhari (P.S. Ramgarah)
to Golakpatimachara, Maichyachara, Tarananrhari,
- 1983 : Lagang, etc.

(Produced from the report of the Organising Committee, Chit-tagong Hill Tracts campaign, Amsterdam, 1986 and An Account of Genocide and Atrocities committed by the Bangladesh

Forces in CHT published by Jana Samhati Samiti, January, 1987).

In the above noted human carnages and massacres, it had claimed life of more than 9,500 lives of the tribals and more than 85,000 people had been uprooted from their villages (60,000 had fled away to India and the remaining 25,000 to Burma). In the hands of the Bangladesh Army some thousands became incapacitated and crippled. Some hundred children had become orphans.

For the first time, in 1972, the Constitution of the sovereign state of Bangladesh was adopted and the Constitution had neither retained regulation of CHT of 1900 nor the special status. Therefore, a delegation from CHT headed by Manabendra Narayan Lama, a member of Parliament from CHT, President of Jana Samhati (The United People's Party) along with 18 tribal leaders met Mujibur Rahman, President of Bangladesh on February 15, 1972 to discuss the demands of the tribal place of CHT, which among others included the following :

- (i) Autonomy for CHT with a legislature of its own;
- (ii) Retention of CHT Regulation of 1900 in the Bangladesh Constitution;
- (iii) Constitution of Tribal Chief's office;
- (iv) Constitutional provision restricting the amendment of the 1900 Regulation and imposition of a ban on influx of the non-tribal people into CHT.

The President rejected all the demands of the tribal leaders with scorn on the grounds that this would encourage ethnic feelings. It is said that the President angrily remarked to drown the tribals in a flood of people from plains and said 'Do away with your ethnic identity, go home and become Bengalis'. Failing to receive any response the tribal leaders had to return empty handed greatly dismayed and disillusioned. The President's firmness to do away with tribalism had on the contrary energised the tribalism in the minds of the leaders. In

this atmosphere, the growth of nationalist feeling is quite natural and ultimately the Parbattya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samiti (JSS or the CHT People's Coordination Association) was born in 16th May, 1972, mainly comprising of the Chakma faction—to seek constitutional recognition for their district ethnic identity. The Maoist ideas had stired in them (Manabendra Narayan Larma, Chairman of JSS belonged to the short lived Rangamati Communist Party). Manabendra's younger, brother, Jyotirindra Narayan Larma, known as Shantu, was put incharge of the armed wing, the Shanti Bahini (Peace Force) in 1973. The naming of the armed wing as Shanti Bahini (Peace Force) by the JSS is itself an indication that the tribals of CHT are against the principle of hostility and blood shed which is in harmony of their religious ethics. They had not foresaken their faith in peace to their crucial end. The Bangladesh Government continued to follow the policy which it inherited from the previous Government to equate and amalgamate the Mongolian ethnic race of Buddhist faiths with the Bengali race. The Chakma leaders were very much grieved at this policy of Bangladesh Government.

The first general election in Bangladesh was held in 1973 in which Manabendra Larma and Chaitoi Rouza were elected to the Parliament from CHT and they put up demand for regional autonomy. The Bangladesh Government could not go on for long with multi political parties and ultimately the Government banned all political parties and made one Party Government. Ultimately, through a coup, the Military authorities took over charge of the civilian Government. Manabendra went underground as the Military Government became very suspicious of him. Jyotirindra Larma (younger brother of Manabendra) was arrested. A reign of terror was let loose in CHT with growing violations of human rights and military shoot out all over without any provocation. The military rampage had shaken the conscience of every right thinking persons. Finally, the Maung Chief Maung Prue Sain who was then Tribal Adviser to the Government of Bangladesh on his visit to Rangamati in February, 1972 was shocked and appalled with the existing situation and sent the following telegram :

"Express Telegram—Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Prime Minister of Bangladesh Dacca Repeat to President of Bangladesh/Minister for Labour and Health/Secretary General of Bangladesh. Visited Rangamati on Sixth Instant Stop Extremely Aggrieved to Find Innocent Tribal People Arrested Indiscreetly as Alleged collaborators Stop Earnestly Request Instruct Civil Administration Immediate Release of all Tribals so far Arrested without Prejudice and Further Arrest be Ceased Stop—Maug Raja and Tribal Adviser of Bangladesh."

(Extract from 'Stop Genocide in Chittagong Hill Tracts by Ven, Aggavansa Mahathero, Chakma Rajguru, p. 7 published in October, 1981).

The Government gave a deaf ear to this and on contrary Government augmented militarisation in CHT. Besides the Bangladesh Regiment, other military and para military troops like B.D.R., Ansars, Army Battalion Police, B.R.P. etc. were intensively deployed throughout CHT. Government had also established anti-guerilla training centre in CHT. The massive military build up in CHT only indicates that the sufferings of the Tribals are increasing year by year. Every one knows what disastrous effect can military create over the innocent civilians especially when the Army is not put to discipline.

When the hill people were in hot chase by the army the Bangladesh President was shot dead by his own army in 1975. When the new President took over, a second delegation of 67 persons representing all sections of the people met the President Justice A.S. Sayam on 19th November 1975 and placed before him the demands of the tribal people, but all to no end. In fact, the civilian Government was a mere puppet of the Military and very soon in 1975, General Ziaur Rehman became the new President of Bangladesh. In 1976, Ashok Dewan presented similar proposal to the General Ziaur Rehman then present but without any result. He ruled the country for six years.

The tribal leaders did not give up their persistent attempts to bring out a permanent solution of their problems and with a view to this they met the military ruler in 1976, but unfortunately instead of taking reconciliatory steps to reduce the gap of division the Military Government had encouraged more military actions in Chakma areas collaborating with zealous Muslims from the plains. It also encouraged proselytization in tribal areas which caught them in a game plan threatening their religious identity in particular and their life and culture in general.

Census record indicates that from 1975 to 1981 the total population of CHT grew 46.85% compared to the growth rates of only 21.81% for the total population of Bangladesh. These Muslims came in through the Government's initiative to bring a demographic change in CHT. This continuous and planned influx of Bengali Muslims in CHT had aggravated the miseries of the tribal people. From 1980 to 1982, in two years the total number of Muslim Bengali families settled in CHT rose to 250,000 families. The tribals were badly shaken as they found that their country would not remain theirs for long. The mores and norms of the Buddhist tribals of CHT are against the rebelliousness and therefore they beat a precipitate retreat on the pressure by military development and Muslim settlers. With a view to assuaging the wounded feelings of the tribals, the Military Government formed a tribal convention in 1977, but it failed to yield any result as the people knew it was a wolf in sheep's clothing.

Against this backdrop the Jana Samhati Samiti reviewed their programme and policies in their second party congress which was held in the underground Head Quarters near Rangamati in Bangladesh. When it came to light, the Government launched mere terrorising tactics and carried out more massacres. When the human right situation had exceeded beyond limit, some international organisations outside Bangladesh voiced their concern. Everyone learnt through national and international news media like news papers, radio and television about the on going slaughtering in CHT. Also, some

human right organisations like Anti-Slavery Society and other International organisations charged Bangladesh Government that the tribals in CHT were being subjected to an on going Government backed campaign of murder, eviction and some forcible conversion to Islam. The Bangladesh Government totally denied all allegations of infringement on human rights in in CHT.

In 1979, the general election took place in Bangladesh and Upendra Lal Chakma supported by Jana Samhati Samiti was elected as Bangladesh Parliament. The Government constituted a tribal convention (Liaison Committee) with a view for communal reconciliation but without any success. In reality it never took for doing anything and it had the same fate as the Tribal convention. The Government was continuing destabilising policy and the tribals were simply frustrated, Jyotirindu Larma was released from the custody in 1980, but he again went underground.

On April 1, 1980 UpendraLal Chakma, sitting M.P. stated in a press conference that thousands of Bengali refugees in collaboration with the Army committed plunder in Tribal villages. On 25th April, 1980 opposition M.Ps Rashed Khan Menon, Sahjahan Siraj and Upendra Lal Chakma gave a press conference in Dacca after returning from a tour of CHT where they met about 500 tribals. The incidents were reported by them to the Government. This report stated among other things, that the Government plan includes forcible distortion and destruction of the religion, culture, language and traditions of the tribal people. Unfortunately, it did not bring the change of distabishing plan but on the contrary government further intensified it. As a result of it more than 12,000 tribal people crossed over to Mizoram in India. In 1982, Ziaur Rahman was assassinated in a military coup and General Hussain Mohammed Ershad came to power under martial law. Though the ruler changed, the policy towards CHT remained unchanged. The tribals were under great threat and pressure. Some nations voiced their concern and pressure. Some nations voiced their concern and insisted on the Bangladesh Govern-

ment to bring an end to the difficulties of the tribals of CHT. The Government did not take any hint from this, on the contrary it only increased military actions against the minority tribals. Finally Bangladesh Government proclaimed a general amnesty on 3rd Oct, 1983 and assured that those rebels who had been convicted or facing trial would be released and job opportunities would be created for them. In response to this the Central Executive Jana Samhati Samiti, CHT sent an open letter to the Chief Martial Law Administrator informing that 'The war of self determination shall run unabated'. The copy of the same is enclosed at the annexure. A few outstanding massacre during Ershad's rule (Ershad ruled for 9 years) are as below :

1984—1985 : At Bhisanchara, Barkal, Gourasten, Choto Harina, Rangamati, etc.

1986—1987 : At Mahalchari, Manikchari, Dighinala Ramgarh, Banduk Bhangra, Chhowngrasuri, Ghagra, Nakkyapara, Guimara, Matiranga, Harachara, Sukarchari, Karbaripara, Morangchari, etc.

1988—up to : At Tintila, Baghaichari, Longadu, Bagachara,
date Mahajanpara, Bataypara, Yurengchari, Bogachatar, Dighinala, Kassalong, Logang, Subulang, Fakira, Dumdumya, Mandirchara, Bandar Haza, Pancharimukh, Upakchari, Ramgarh, Khakrachari, Ganga Rampur, Dewanpara, Fakirchara, Bangori Chara, Bonjogichara, Lakshmichari, Matiranga, Kudukchari, Bansirampara, Luhipara, Maradula, etc.

The tribals further sank into despair when the Government started grouping the tribals into Jukto Graam (collective village) and Adarsha Gram (ideal village). In fact there were frequent attacks and counter attacks between Shanti Bahini and the Bangladesh army. Whenever Bengali Muslim settlers were killed by Shanti Bahini, the Bangladesh army retaliated by killing the tribals. It was like an undeclared war against the minority Buddhist tribals. The number of tribal refugees greatly increased in India. The Government of India had to seal the

border and the Indian BSF were alerted on the international borders (The BSF pushed back the Chakma refugees who entered into Mizoram). To bring to the attention of the world community of the human right violation in CHT, Shanti Bahini on January 19, 1984, kidnapped 5 (five) employees of the Mega International Oil Company who were working in CHT, two were released immediately to inform the concerned authorities of the demand of £200,000 ransom, payable in Indian currency. This incident was widely reported in the international media.

Some of the ranks and file of Shanti Bahini felt that the time is not with them and suffered disillusionment with the leadership of the party. Obviously, in the general congress of JSS, the members were divided in two groups on the issue of induction of Jyotirindra Larma after his release from army captivity to head the armed wing without taking any proper examination. This led to factional fighting and it turned to be very crucial. In fact, J.N. Larma was put incharge of the armed wing (Shanti Bahini) in 1973, and following his capture in January, 1978, Preeti Kumar Chakma replaced him. It is believed that the Larma brothers were agreeable to accepting autonomy within Bangladesh, whereas the Preeti's followers stood for complete succession. Open fighting broke out between the two factions, and ultimately in an armed clash on June 14, 1983 the President M.N. Larma and 30 other ranks were killed and more than were injured. This was the most deeply black coloured day in the history of Shanti Bahini, the disastrous effect was soon felt. Both the groups drifted apart, as two ends of a pole. The faction which was faithful to M.N. Larma was led by his younger brother J.N. Larma and the other faction was headed by Preeti Kumar Chakma who came to prominence during the time when J.N. Larma was in army's custody. The group led by Larma brothers was known as 'Lamba' (long), and the other led by P.K. group was known as 'Badi' (short). Taking the advantage of this inter group rivalry, the army shot up combing operations to liquidate the Shanti Bahini became less mobile and less active than what was four to five years back. Many moderate Chakmas felt that the movement had

failed. Obviously, Shanti Bahini lost its prominence, popularity and became some what isolated at least for some time. But the P.K. group could not sail long and within two months it disintegrated and many of its followers surrendered to the military authorities. They finally laid down arms (sources from P.K. group says that the laying down of arms was done in the interest to maintain solidarity between the two factions). The B.B.C. announced on 3rd May 1985 that 233 rebels Shanti Bahini surrendered on 29th April 1985 (Monday) on reaching an agreement with Bangladesh Government. It was also said that the Bangladesh Government had agreed to stop settlement of plain people in the CHT and surrender should cease all connections with the two factions who are still underground. The daily English news paper 'Statesman' in its issue on May 12, 1985 (Calcutta) writes that :

The escalating violence and seizure of lands which traditionally belong to the Buddhist Chakma, Mog, Tripuri and about 10 other tribal clans by the Muslim settlers from the plains, supported by the authorities in Dhaka, are not only affecting the 6000,000 strong ethnic population of the Chittagon Hill Tracts of Bangladesh but also causing continuous tension along Tripura's southern border. Between September and December in 1981 some 20,000 tribal refugees had crossed over to villages in southern Tripura from the Hill Tracts and many more were turned back by Bangladesh and Indian border guards. The refugees had reported, 'Fullscale military attacks' on them along with attacks by the low land settlers.

The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees was eventually able to negotiate the Tribal return to Bangladesh after a couple of months. It was also claimed, on their return most of them found their land already occupied by the settlers from the plains. Almost similar was the exodus in March 1977, December 1978, December 1979, June 1983.

The text further says : After an estimated population of 52,898 Muslim families from the plains were given resettlement in three districts in three separate phases since 1979. The ethnic composition of the hill tracts has been changed considerably. According to Bangladesh official records of 1941, the Buddhist and the Hindu tribals had been constituted 97.5% of the population. Currently the Buddhist and Muslims are representing about 55% and 45% respectively.

For the refugees the journey to Tripura was not that easy. According to some refugees they had to undertake a nine day trek through jungles without food. Many of them died on their way. Many helpless children lost their parents and became orphans. To pacify the Chakmas the Government announced a month long amnesty from 23th May to 25th June 1985, but it could not allure the followers of Shanti Bahini. After having failed to bring to the net of the Government, the military again resorted to combing operations and as a result a fresh group of refugees arrived in Tripura and by the end of May its number swelled over to 50,527 and by the end of the year the number was as high as 60,000. Finally, on the International pressure the Bangladesh Government agreed to sit together with the JSS for discussion and the meeting was held on 17th December 1987. The JSS presented five points demand for the protection of national identity of the Jumma people of the CHT.

In January 1988, some representatives of the Amnesty International visited CHT and in its report on the illegal killings in CHT. The Amnesty International has documented the Government's oppressive policy against the minority tribals.

An International Committee of investigation on violence of human rights in CHT submitted a paper at its conference held on 11 October, 1986 at Amsterdam and it was the first time that the plight of the tribal people of CHT became known to the world community. An extract from the report is produced at the annexure.

Rajiv Gandhi, Prime Minister of India expressed his great concern at the prevailing situation in CHT and though SAARC avoids domestic issues, Rajiv Gandhi and General Ershad announced at the end of Dhaka summit that they would jointly try to solve the problem of insurgency in the CHT. Much water has flown since then but without any solution. Bangladesh's economy is mainly dependent on the aid from foreign nations. The donor countries were approached by various international human rights organisations to put pressure on Bangladesh to bring an end to the ethnic problem in CHT. The Swedish Government had responded in the early 1980s and it pulled down of a forest development project in CHT because the Bangladesh authorities refused to guarantee the interest of the local inhabitants. The major donor are Islamic countries whose prime objectives are to bring the total population of Bangladesh within the Islamic fold. As a result the flow of money through the pipe lines of the religious groups in CHT has been enormous. This proselytisation is backed by the Government whose state religion is Islam. The other major donor countries like USA, U.K. France, Germany etc have not taken any visible steps to link aid with genocide in CHT. While an American Senator on his visit to Dakka declared that he would initiate legislation in the US Senate linking aid to Bangladesh with growth of democracy in the South Asian Countries. This threat was too serious for Ershad as he had already arranged three elections in 4 (four) years by 'vote decoity' which frustrated the growth of democracy in South Asian nations. Therefore, he was actually counting days and hoping against hope.

In February 1989, Ershad came to London for the first time on official visit. He told the British press that he is doing everything for holding a free and fair election. (But there is no guarantee of the participation of opposition parties). He also told that the CHT problem would be solved in no time. The Survival International London W 2 mailed a letter to the editor Independent London (Monday 20 Feb. 1989) which reads 'Western governments who think President Ershad in Bangladesh's best hope for stability are ignoring his government's

consistent and brutal violation for the human rights of over half a million tribal people in the Chittagong Hill Tracts'.

In March 1989, Bangladesh Parliament (Jatiya Sangsad) passed four bills of Hill District Council (Rangamati Parbatya Sthaniya Sarkar, Parishad, Khagarachari Parbatya Sthaniya Sarkar Parishad, Bandarban Parbatiya Sthaniya Sarkar Parishad, Parbatya Zilla Special Bill) aimed to resolving long standing conflict and breaking serious cycle of killing that has characterised life in CHT for all most 20 years. With the passing of the bills Autonomy was granted to the areas of three districts Rangamati, Khagrachari and Bandarban and government was considering election to the three district councils which was to take over local administration. The government hoped that these concessions would undermine ethnic minority support for Shanti Bahini, who have been fighting for CHT's autonomy since 1970s. The JSS strongly protested against the bill and Shanti Bahini stepped up their attacks on the Bangladesh army and settlers from plains. They also warned the tribal villager of dire consequences if they take part in the elections and asked to boycott the election. Therefore, numerous military check posts were set up to keep close watch on movements and heavy armed protections were provided to the election candidates as well as the villagers. In spite of this in the past two months prior to the election over 50 people were killed in the Shanti Bahini onslaught. The military was hell bent to push through the election under the command of the General Officer Commanding, Chittagong Division who was the in-charge of the entire operation in the hill tracts. The District Council election was most significant for Ershad and his image (the opposition accused the Ershad's government of having rigged successive Parliamentary and Presidential polls). Therefore he arranged a partyless district council election to convince the people at home and abroad that he is making sincere attempt to restore democratic norms and that free and fair elections can be held under his rule. In an attempt to isolate the Shanti Bahini the Government had created the District Council and the election of the district council was

staged by the army in the backdrop of military operation. Contrary to the demand of the tribal for the restoration of the hill tracts regulation of 1900, the Ershad's government had repealed hill district council, the salient features of which are as under :

- (i) The names of the tree hill districts will be :
 - (a) Rangamati Hill District.
 - (b) Bandarban Hill District.
 - (c) Khagrachari Hill District.
- (ii) Names of the Parishads of Hill Districts :
 - (a) Rangamati Hill District Local Government Parishad.
 - (b) Bandarban Hill District Local Government Parishad.
 - (c) Khagrachari Hill District Local Government Parishad.
- (iii) The following tribes would be considered as permanent residents in three Hill Districts in-addition to the non-tribal population living in these districts :
 - (a) Rangamati : Chakma, Marma, Tongchinga, Tripura Lushai, Pankho and Khiyang.
 - (b) Bandarban : Marma, Mro (Murong), Tripura, Tonchoinga, Bowm, Chakma, Khumi, Uchai, Chak, Riyang, Pankho and Lushai.
 - (c) Khagrachari : Chakma, Tripura and Marma.
- (iv) The proposed Zilla Parishads for the three Hill Districts will be on the following basis :
 - (a) Rangamati : Chairman-1 (tribal), Chakma-10, Marma-4, Tonchoinga-2, Tripura-1, Lushai-1, Pankho-1, Khiyang-1 and non tribal-10, Total-31.

- (b) Bandarban—Chairman-1 (tribal), Marma and Khiyang-10, Muro (Murong), Tonchoinga-1, Chakma-1, Bowm-1, Chak-1 and non-tribal-11, Total : 31.
- (c) Khagrachari : Chairman-1 (tribal), Chakma-9, Marma-6, Tripura-6 and non-tribal-9, Total : 31.
- (v) Members of these Zilla Parishads will have to be permanent residents of that particular Zilla.
- (vi) Each voter within the Hill District will be able to vote on the Chairman and also on all the other Members of the Special Zilla Parishad.
- (vii) The Special Zilla Parishad will be constituted on the basis of direct election. The election roll prepared by the National Election Commission would be the basis for its election.
- (viii) Other details regarding the Zilla Parishads to be constituted in each of these districts are being finalised by the Ministry of Law and Justice according to the requirements of Law and in keeping with the Constitution. They relate mainly to :
 - (a) The eligibility requirements of those wishing to participate as candidates in the elections to be held for the post of Chairman and members of the Zilla Parishad.
 - (b) Duration of the Zilla Parishad.
 - (c) Method of resigning from membership of the Zilla Parishad;
 - (d) Who can be the Acting Chairman in the absence of the Chairman of the Zilla Parishad;
 - (e) The preparation of the electoral rolls and the supervision of the election to the Zilla Parishad;
 - (f) The ability of the Zilla Parishad to appoint personnel for class-III and class-IV posts and the

- framing of rules by this Parishad for the administrative functioning of such personnel;
- (g) The formation of the Local Government Parishad Tahsil in each District;
 - (h) The preparation of budget by each Zilla Parishad for the administration of each District;
 - (i) The principles by which the auditing of expenditure would be carried out in each District;
 - (j) The duties and responsibilities of the Chairman and Members of the Parishad to the Zilla Parishad;
 - (k) The question of collection of taxes;
 - (l) The suspension or dissolution of the Zilla Parishad;
 - (m) The right to appeal against any decision of the Zilla Parishad;
 - (n) The right of each Zilla Parishad on the question of transfer of land and settlement of land within each district;
 - (o) The formation of Zilla police force;
 - (p) The power of the Zilla Parishad to make their own Rules for the proper functioning of the Zilla Parishad;
 - (q) The different subjects of governance for which the Zilla Parishad will be solely responsible;
 - (r) The heads on which each Zilla Parishad can levy taxes;
 - (s) The future status of the Circle Chief in relation to each Zilla Parishad.

The JSS rejected the District Council based on five grounds which are as below :

- (i) The regulation vests enormous powers with the Bangladesh government to dissolve the council ;

- (ii) The regulation also do not give any power to the District Council to detect and deport plain men rehabilitated in CHT by successive Dhaka regime;
- (iii) It also keeps 90% of the land area of CHT from the perview of the District Council as the Kaptai lake and Hydel project, Betbunipa Earth Satellite Station and reserve forest falls outside the district council;
- (iv) The District Councils are empowered to settle plains men in CHT which can be manipulated to organise influx from plain district in future;
- (v) But, the main objection to the District Council is that the Bangladesh government is trying to split tribal solidarity by creating three district councils on ethnic and linguistic basis.

Therefore, the Government was finding it difficult to make progress in the peace talk with the JSS, whose leaders told the Government that there is no merit for peace talk especially since the three Bills did not guarantee 'Regional Autonomy'. Despite the dead lock, the Bangladesh Government had declared that election to the newly formed district councils in the three hill districts would be held by June, 1989. Ershad, President of Bangladesh in an open meeting in April end at Khagrachari district headquarters expressed the hope that the polls in the district councils would help establishing 'Permanent Peace' in the hill districts. He said that the armed cadres of the Shanti Bahini who surrendered under the general amnesty would be able to take part in the election. When Ershad declared first general amnesty three years ago, quite a good number of the Shanti Bahini followers reportedly surrendered. A few hundred surrendered in Rangamati. But the insurgency did not end.

The proposed election of the district councils was strongly opposed by the Shanti Bahini. On the other hand the Bangladesh Government was bent on holding election. Working on a new policy, Government sent a high power official team (Commissioner Chittagong Division, a Deputy Commissioner

and several tribal representatives) to the refugee camps in south Tripura for discussion with the evacuees persuade them to return to their villages before elections to the Chittagong hill district councils slated for June, 1989. This team could not even visit the refugee camp as no tribal leader agreed to accompany them protesting against the killing and torture on the tribals by security forces. While the Bangladesh team was in Tripura to visit the refugee camp at that time a fresh group of tribal refugees (300-600 numbers) entered Tripura through Karbook on May 14. They reported that more were waiting at the international border. The refugee camp leaders had made it clear to the Bangladesh team that they would not return until Tribal Autonomy was granted for the Chittagong Hill Tracts and the army and Muslims resettlers were completely withdrawn from the hills (on July 11, last year on the same mission a high level delegation headed by the Bangladesh High Commissioner in New Delhi and comprising six senior officials and eleven tribal representatives, including the Chakma King visited the refugee camp, but they failed to convince the refugees to return).

Many news media including the national news papers ran with reports on the growing events in the control of coming elections in CHT. The Bangladesh Government was keen to uphold a clean image before the international community by holding elections in CHT and towards this direction the repatriation of the refugees from India was most important. At the same time the Shanti Bahini was determined to frustrate the election. As a result the rise of arms again started and the tribals started to suffer at the hands of the Bangladesh security forces. Between May 24-25, 1989 after a lull of about 10 days, more than 4,500 tribal refugees from CHT had crossed over to Tripura following disturbances in CHT, and sought refuge in five camps in south Tripura. By May 28, the total number of fresh arrivals was 5,600. They were sheltered at Jatanbari and Takumbarni, the biggest refugee camp. The fresh influx of refugees was increasing every day and since May 14, more than 10,000 chakma tribals crossed over to the south Tripura opposite to CHT raising the total number of refugees to

54,000. The Government of India had so far spent over 14 crores on the relief operations of the tribal refugees from CHT. The evacuees were quite apprehensive about tribal influx following the spurt in violence in the CHT which continued till the election. The daily news paper Statesman tried to bring out situation prevailing in CHT in this traumatic period and some of the reports are put in the annexures for better insight into the situation. These are 'Dhaka getting the better of Chakma militants (May 29, 1989), 'Chakma appeal to help tribal refugees (June 6, 1989), 'Dhaka's hand behind killings in Chittagong Hill Tracts (June 8, 1989), 'Growing intolerance towards Chakmas' (June 12, 1989), 'Victims of Partition (June 1989), 'CHT polls on a war footing' (June 24, 1989), 'CHT election a political bluff' (June 27, 1989), 'All eyes on CHT polls' (June 25, 1989) 'Large turn out at CHT polls' (June 26, 1989) etc.

Despite stiff resistances elections were held to the district councils. According to some tribal leaders Shanti Bahini had failed to bring independence, nevertheless it forced the Dhaka Government to give up to some extent its policy of criminal negligence towards the tribals. This is obviously a great achievement.

In November, 1990, the Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission an independent body was permitted by the Bangladesh Government to visit CHT and the refugee camps in Tripura on a fact finding mission of violation of human rights in CHT. The Commission's report was published in May 1991 titled 'Life not Ours'. The report concludes that :

The Commission found extensive and continuing violations of human rights. It concludes that there had been massive illegality in land matters in the CHT, under Bangladesh law. The Commission concludes that the present system of District councils is inadequate as a system of autonomy for a territorial cultural minority. Remedying these problems will not be easy and, necessarily, will take some time. In the mean time,

and in order to facilitate progress, it is vital to have a continuing monitoring capacity in place, this is, of course, not at all unprecedented in modern international law. Special rapporteurs for particular countries have been named by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, either on an *ad hoc* or on a continuing basis. The Commission recommends such a special rapporteur on the CHT issues, supplemented by continuing investigatory and advisory work by the International Labour Organisation and by competent Non-Governmental Organisations. (Organising Committee Chittagong Hill Tracts Campaign, 1991 : 122).

This report has caught the attention of the world community in general. Some right thinking persons in Bangladesh became aware of the situation prevailing in CHT. Following this, on August 26, 1992, a seminar was organised in Dhaka by the Bangladesh Human Rights Commission in collaboration with International centre of Law in development, New York and it resolved that each and every incidences of human rights violations in the CHT should be checked and should be challenged before the honourable High Court. Any one from the CHT who is in detention or illegally arrested or seizure, can avail this facility and access under the law. It is a welcome news for the minority tribals of CHT that there are still some people who dare say a spade a spade.

During the recent official visit in May 26, 1992, a year after the return of democracy in Bangladesh, Begum Khaleda Zia, Prime Minister Bangladesh to New Delhi, the problems of the return of tribal refugees in Tripura was discussed with the Prime Minister of India P.V. Narasimha Roa, and it was finally decided that a joint task force headed by the two respective Home Secretaries would be set up to tackle the lingering problems of return of Chakma refugees now in Tripura.

The political wing of the Shanti Bahini JSS (Peoples Solidarity Organisation) had announced a cease fire in response

to Prime Minister, Begum Khalida Zia's offer for dialogue in August, 1992. In a statement the JSS announced an unilateral cease fire till November 10, 1992, to pave the way for a durable solution of the tribal problems of CHT. The JSS had also declared that the Tribals would reserve the right to self defence in case any attack from Muslim settlers and Bangladesh Security Forces. So far so good, no major violent incident has been reported, can one presume now that the coast is clear or the tribals of CHT are to be vanquished in no time.

Bangladesh has for long accused India of allowing its territory to be used by the Shanti Bahini as sanctuary. In the same manner, India has accused Bangladesh of allowing hide outs in CHT to insurgent of many tribal groups operating in the whole of North East in India. The allegations are not completely unbounded, as the outlawed insurgents do cross over into foreign territories in both the countries, as it has easy access, although not with official patronage. The borders of both the countries are now dotted with the security forces (Border Security Forces in India and Bangladesh Ricles in Bangladesh), but the borders has never been peaceful. In 1984, many tribals from CHT fled to Tripura and Mizoram due to atrocious situation and the matter was raised in the Indian Parliament and the Home Minister had to make a statement expressing India's grave concern on the emerging situation. The Shanti Bahini stepped up its raids on the new Muslim settlers (despite the division of Shanti Bahini into two factions; the Larma group whose army chief was the self styled Major. RIP (party name), and the Preeti group whose army chief was the self style Major. Sagar). Knowledgeable sources indicate that the two groups were at loggers head. In spite of this set back they could be counted as a dominant force.

Taking the opportunity of the division of Shanti Bahini, a call for surrender was announced by the Government of Bangladesh which was responded by surrender by a section of Preeti group to the authorities in Khagrachari Upazela in Rangamati district. The Larma group remained committed to their Autonomy demands. As the crossing of tribals from

CHT was creating spillover effect on some of the India's North Eastern States, the government of India became assertive on Bangladesh to stop the inflow of refugees. Being compelled by this situation, Bangladesh government made a declaration of amnesty for the surrenderees in between the period October, 1983 to February 25, 1984; and promised to give each surrenderee Takka (rupees) 5,000 during the first year of surrenderee and 20 kgs of food grains per week for the same period. Each family to be allotted 5 acres of land, in case they want to do farming. The government had also assured that even if one was convicted or facing trial, the surrenderee to be released within a year after surrender. Following this declaration, again, a good number from the ranks and files from Preeti group had surrendered and laid down arms. Not being satisfied with the surrender results, the Bangladesh government again resorted full scale army operation and since then the human massacres were on the increase and violences were escalating with no end insight. Together with the army operation, Bangladesh government lend support to the Islamic Fundamentalist to force the tribals to embrace Islam. The Anti-Slavery Society recorded that Tribals in the CHT are being subjected to an ongoing Government backed campaign of murder, rape, eviction and sometimes forcible conversion to Islam. Similarly, an Amnesty International reported serious Human Rights violation in CHT including killing of Buddhist Monks, Novice Monks and children who were branded or suspected of aiding the Shanti Bahini. A mini war was going on in CHT. At the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) meeting held in Dhaka, the Prime Minister of India Rajiv Gandhi drew the attention of Ershad on the situation of CHT, but it failed to receive a place in the SAARC's agenda meeting as it scrupulously avoided discussing cross-national ethnic problems which increased on an uncountable proportions on the borders. In April-May 1986, Shanti Bahini raided the villages of the new Muslim settlers of Taidong, Tanakkapara, Asylong and Chantilla and within two hours the Bangladesh army were flown to the area by helicopter. As a result of attacks and counter attacks from both sides many tribals fled to Tripura and they were sheltered in Karbook, Jayala, Silachhari and Bhagabantilla, areas along Tripura's southern border from the CHT of Bangladesh.

Similar exodus took place in March 1977, December 1978, December 1979, March 1980, September 1981, June 1983, May 1984 and so on. While CHT was bleeding some western agencies were eager to finance heavily in some of the developmental activities in CHT, which would only enhance the suffering of the tribals. The Australian Government agreed to finance for the construction of thirteen new routes covering 345 miles to link up the inaccessible region with the main stream. Also, a multi National Oil Company announced to spent in CHT during the next 25 years for exploring oil and natural gas. A British Agency was also providing fund for renovating telephone communication link with the interior. The London based Survival International reported that despite appeals being made repeatedly by Amnesty International, Survival International, The Anti Slavery Society, International Fellowship Reconciliation, London based Bangladesh People's Democratic Movement, The Human Rights Commission of the UN along with the Humanity Protection Forum of India reflected concern over what was happening in CHT. Some foreign agencies continued activities in that area. Among the agencies the Asian Development Bank which was involved in a dollar \$ 48 million, CHT development project which would only attract further settlers and encroachment into Tribal land which in turn would create more violence and rapid destruction of Tribal culture. Together with all this the Islamic countries are providing huge amount of fund through Islamic Fundamentalist Organisations in CHT. In July, 1986, Ershad came to New Delhi on an official visit and taking this opportunity the Home Minister of India, Buta Singh raised the question of Chakma influx and Ershad agreed to curb the tribal influx into India.

But it was not to bring an end of the influx of the refugees, on the contrary, it only increased the number of refugees out of fresh killing and arson. The Amnesty International expressed grave concern over the gross violation of Human Rights and urged the Bangladesh government to implement the IA's 8 (eight) points recommendations without delay. The IA wanted the Authorities in Bangladesh to demonstrate their total

opposition to torture the tribal in the CHT. The IA also demanded that the prisoners should be held in publicly organised places and informations on their whereabouts must promptly be communicated to their families. Also the government should set up an independent body to investigate the complaints of torture in custody and publish the findings in all the cases.

Venerable Aggavansa Mahathero (Chakma Rajguru), a Pali Scholar (now in refuge in India), had appealed to all democratic countries, nations to bring pressure on the government of Bangladesh to stop 'Genocide' in CHT. Also, another prominent Buddhist Monk Bimal Bhikkhu, Chairman of the Parbatya Chattal Buddha Anath Ashram, crossed over to India as the situation was not favourable for his continuing work. The operation was kept out of view of the outsiders as no visitor was allowed to visit CHT. All governments from Mujibur Rahman to Ershad had remained one in pressing a military solution for the minority tribal problem of CHT and therefore the creation of Bangladesh had only trampled over the future of the tribal buddhist in an Islamic state. The military measures have made many orphans who were in need of urgent help. Bimal Bhikkhu sympathised with them and took up their cases and ultimately found foster fathers for more than 50 (fifty) orphans in France in collaboration with Partage a French organisation with Headquarter at Paris engaged in humanitarian work in many countries including India and Bangladesh.

Mr. R.N. Roy Chaudury in his letter (Delhi April, 18) to the aditor in the English daily newspaper Statesman published in its issue of April 24, 1987, pointed out India's moral duty to save the Chakma and concluded saying that 'India has a moral obligation to help the Chakma who lost their homes to Pakistan largely on account of the indifference and shortsightedness of Congress leaders before partition. As Mr. Datta Ray writes, Sardar Patel warned Mountbatten that the notion of

forcing (Chakma) into Pakistan was so monstrous that they would be justified in resisting to the utmost, and (could) count to our maximum support. But the support proved elusive when Radcliffe gave the hill to Pakistan. Patel's was a lone voice when British betrayed the Chakmas.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

Chakma Proverb

1. Bhul bada fudi ude jai.
Rotten things must come to surface.
2. Sedam nei vedam, mono ujure teen adam.
A weak person speaks more but in reality he does no work.
3. Mamubo garte bhagina uju pai.
It looks easier when a work is done by others.
4. Gam khadat ladi mare.
Truth is never liked.
5. Jei nadh uda pare, sei nadh pani ejha pare.
Women's foremost duty is to keep the interest of the father in-law's house after the marriage.
6. Jhee re mari bou-re segai.
A tactful mother in-law beats her own daughter to teach her daughter-in law.
7. Bajang manjhee chalong badlai.
Notorious people change their appearance (colour) according to their necessity.
8. Madath sedal puree khem.
It is used to humiliate a persen. It means to put fire on the head of a person for burning sedol.
9. Kaai kudum ghu aa baj, dura kudum phula baj.
Relatives living nearer always smell bad whereas relatives living at a distance are always sweeter.

10. Jei kurabe uribo baat pharpharai.
Morning shows the day.
11. Aage khai age dhai.
No work is to be kept for tomorrow, otherwise it would be too late.
12. Churottun ma bab nei.
A thief would not spare even his parents.
13. Na dele na lage pap.
If you won't feel for, or you would not be called for giving witnesses.
14. Banya tenga bhara, bhag garle cara cara.
So long it is divided into shares it looks huge, but after division it would look very small.
15. Bura guraai song.
Old people and the child are the same by nature.
16. Jeei kukurar laj bengal, chumat bharele-o uju na aabo,
Dhamma (characteristics) remain unchanged. The tail of a dog would remain curved and it can not be made straight even by putting inside the bamboo.
17. Ek mokya jhadi bhat.
Di mokyai ladhi bhat,
Tin mokyai kabalat hat.
With one wife one will get quick meal,
With two wives one will get meal with scorn,
With three wives one may even find difficult to get meal.
18. Jei ful ninde sei ful pinde.
Which is most hated, destiny (ironically) bring the same.
19. Nun na deele ghee-o madi.
Without salt even the ghee is not tasty.
20. Bhara kum (women) gari chari na pare.
Expectant mother can not put in labour is called Bhara kum as she is unable to undertake any journey by vehicle,

21. Bideshat gele raja jhee-o bedi.
In a foreign country there is no recognition even to a princess.
22. Feda nei veda.
Most useless person.
23. Dhan nei jar, jan nei tar.
No body becomes friend to a poor person.
24. Kana vari padal.
Can not tolerate nonsense talk.
25. Bhaluka jaar.
Frequent sickness.
26. Jyat reed siyat keed.
A vagabond who has no fixed place for shelter.
27. Nua bou nei.
Newly married women must put a cover on her face, to protect her beauty from the gaze from unwanted persons. If anything is kept unnecessarily under the veil, it is remarked generally that nua bou nei.
58. Chidat phudi aage.
That can not be forgotten.
29. Bhujji aajai mog aarana.
It is better to remain happy with the one in hand than to let the one in hand to go with the hope of getting a better one and in that case you might lose both of them.

APPENDIX II

An Extract From Amnesty International Report : 1985, P-210

Amnesty International continued to receive reports of human rights violation in the Chittagong hill tracts, an area in the southeast of the country to which access was severely restricted. Conflict between non-Bengali tribal inhabitants and Bengali settled there under Government policy directives persisted and there was fighting between the tribal Shanti Bahini (Peace Force) and the Police and Army. Amnesty International received information on arbitrary arrests and alleged extra-judicial executions committed by law enforcement personnel during 1984. Members of the Shanti Bahini were also reported to have killed civilians. On 31 May Shanti Bahini units killed at least 77 Bengali settlers at Bhusanchara, near Barkal, an area close to the Indian border. The incident was widely covered by the Bangladesh news media. The following day tribal families living in six mouzas (an administrative unit comprising a few village) in the Barkal area were reportedly attacked by army forces. At least 110 villagers were said to have been killed, and Amnesty International has received the names of the families reportedly killed. No coverage was given to the incident by the domestic news media. Amnesty International was also investigating the deaths of two villagers on 25 June at Santipur, near Khagarachari also in the Chittagong hill tracts. Soldiers reportedly fired on unarmed civilians, a few dozen of whom were gathered at one villager's home for a private celebration.

APPENDIX III

*An Extract from Human Rights in the Chittagong Hill
Tracts of Bangladesh—The Charge of Genocide
by Organising Committee Chittagong
Hill Tracts Campaign*

WHY SHOULD THE WORLD CARE ?

1. Introduction

Why should the world care about the people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts ? Although generally it would not be put in this explicit form, this is basically the question that has to be answered when one is trying to mobilize governments and public opinion on the issue of the people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Or, for that matter, of any relatively small national minority any where. In this paper we should like to analyze and discuss the main arguments that are most frequently used in this matter. In doing so we wish to develop an answer not only to the question why the world should care about these people, but also to the question how the world could care.

As someone who works at RIOP, I am confronted daily with the tragedy of oppressed people and cannot help noticing the striking similarities. There are similarities in the pattern of oppression all over the world as well as in the arguments used to deny the very existence of this oppression. In our opinion this universality of both the pattern of oppression and the arguments used to deny them is not accidental. They are interconnected; both can be interpreted as aspects (or functions) of a process that is essentially worldwide : the development of

the nationstate as the cornerstone of the world political system. Anything that appears to threaten this universal order tends to be eliminated physically but also mentally by universal mechanisms like rationalization and denial. We argue that denying this reality of oppressing national minorities is self-defeating because oppressing national minorities undermines the nation-state morally and legally in the long run.

2. Patterns of Oppression

The people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts share with many other oppressed people the fact that their oppression is above all a *denial of their very identity*. They are people for whom there is no place; who are not expected to exist as such. This is the situation of the Kurds in the Middle East, the Indians in the Americas, the Papuans in West New Guinea. The pattern of oppression should be understood in this light.

(a) One of the more pronounced forms of oppression by denial is denial of a place of one's own, as expressed by a systematic policy of *in-migration* of majority-group settlers at the expense of the local population. This is the case with the so-called 'Bengalization' of the Chittagong Hills. It is a denial of the local people's identity because it makes 'strangers in their own land'. Not only are the people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts a minority in quantitative terms as a result of the rise of the proportion of Bengali Muslims from 2 to probably more than 50% within 20 years; they have also become extremely vulnerable as a result of a complex of factors which tend to reinforce each other. Not only do the newcomers receive land at the expense of the local population; the newcomers also adapt more easily to official economic development policies and to the economic activities of people who act as links to the outside world : traders, middlemen and moneylenders. An important reason is that these people belong to the same majority group in the country. This situation leads to a vicious circle of economic decline for the local people a further decrease of their status and social position and a lowering of their morale.

This is probably the most universal pattern of oppression of national minorities. It is a type of oppression which is all too often justified by the 'Third World'—ideology of economic assistance and development, but which contradicts the basic principles of that ideology. The same reasons that can be adduced to justify foreign aid to 'Third World' countries can be adduced to argue that these national minorities, or 'Fourth World', need special assistance and protection.

(b) An equally clear expression of the denial of 'a place of one's own' is *forced out-migration from the area*, whether as a result of a well-defined government policy of 'relocation', or as a result of 'force of circumstances' when the situation has become unbearable both physically and psychologically. Under certain circumstances, of course, 'relocation' may be justified as an inevitable consequence of national or regional development. But the reality of the so-called 'model villages' in which people are 'relocated' is that they seem primarily intended to destroy the original cultural identity of these people. This is a well-known phenomenon in countries with oppressed minorities like Guatemala and Ethiopia. It generally acts as an additional incentive of involuntary migration to neighbouring countries. In the case of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, too, there is a growing 'spill over' to the states of Tripura and Mizoram in India. Flight means an escape from the immediate threat of physical and cultural extinction, but it can hardly be called a solution. Not only does India not want them because it fears tensions with its own population as well as with the Bangladesh government; there is also the material and psychological deprivation to which refugees are subjected even if they are tolerated.

(c) An obvious form of 'identity denial' is *cultural-religious oppression* in its many manifestations. It is prominent in the case of the Chittagong Hill Tracts. There are many examples of destruction of monasteries, persecution of monks, prohibition of Buddhist rituals, forced Islamization, and so on. Generally the significance of this type of oppression is underestimated by

materialist and secularized minds. In traditional societies the cultural-religious phenomena play a central role in organizing all aspects of life and are for that reason in a way very 'material'. When 'traditional' people are deprived of their cultural and religious modes of expression they are deprived of their general orientation in life and of a system of mutual obligations that is vital in a society with no other institutions to take care of old or less productive people.

(d) The starkest form of oppression is *physical terror and extinction*. The case of the people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts is certainly part of this shameful chapter of human history. The more recent examples are the massacres of Kaukhali, Mubhachari, Panchari and Bhusanchara in which thousands of people were killed. In accordance with the general character of 'identity denial', oppression thrives on the hatred, fear and frustrations of those who are mobilized to do the dirty job: the lower echelons of the military apparatus, the 'people's militias' and the poor migrant settlers.

(e) In general one might characterize the situation of such oppressed peoples as one of *uprootedness and withering*. So many of them are deprived of their land, their relatives, their leaders, and therefore they are deprived of hope in the future. Like other people they should have the chance to re-assemble and develop their identity by having their own historical background recognized.

3. Fallacies

'The arguments against which we make a stand in this paper can be characterized briefly as follows ; denial (It is just propaganda'), minimizing ('There are so many other problems in the Third World'), formalism ('This is a sovereign state'), and 'realism' ('It would not be in their interest to create false hopes'). Generally, these arguments are not articulated or are used with hindsight to rationalize vaguely one's resignation or lack of interest. Those who doubt that such arguments play a decisive role in world-wide acceptance of serious oppression, or even genocide, should recall the effective fallacies that

were used to cover up the persecution and genocide of European Jews before and during the Second World War.

(a) *Denial* : "These stories should be taken with a pinch of salt", or "It is all (or mostly) propaganda". These arguments often succeed in keeping at bay awkward and undesirable information and act as barriers to what is known as 'cognitive dissonance'. Information which does not fit in with one's ideological system is ignored : "These things do not happen in civilized countries". or "Communist countries do not have such problems (Ukrainians ? Estonians ? Tibetans ?)". Of course there are generally organizations that struggle against oppression and will use propaganda in their struggle. But this does not justify the disqualification of *all* information as propaganda. On the contrary, it only emphasizes the importance of gathering reliable information. Despite the inevitable margins of uncertainty that have to be tolerated when we collect hotly contested information, it is possible to bring together knowledge that is both relevant and reliable.

(b) *Minimizing* : This technique is important in the case of the Chittagong Hills : "It is only 600,000 people", or "Bangladesh is such a poor country with so many problems—why all this special attention for this small group?". Of course, there is an element of truth in it. When means are scarce, not only financially but also in terms of world attention and political pressure, priorities have to be made. However, for the people concerned there is little consolation in such considerations. Whether one belongs to a tribe of one hundred or to a nation of a hundred million does not make any difference when one is oppressed. But even to the outside world arguments in terms of numbers or 'size' of the problem are often dubious and of a limited value. By using 'quantitative' arguments one loses sight of fundamental 'qualitative' considerations too easily. One of these is the consideration that certain things are just unacceptable, only because they affect the foundations of our moral and legal convictions. Quite rightly slavery is banned unconditionally and without any

quantitative considerations today, because it is felt to be against the basic rules of our moral order. And it is exactly because of the same dehumanizing character of oppression that it should not be tolerated, in whatever its 'quantity'. There is a basic difference between the enormous problems of poverty and economic development of Bangladesh and other Third World countries and the oppression of national minorities, whether they are Jews in the Soviet Union or the people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh.

(c) *Formalism* : "This is an internal affair" or "Intervention from outside would run counter to the basic principles of our international, legal and political order". Again, there is some sense in the argument. But falsehood lies in the absolute form of the statements. It is more a matter of degrees. In the first place it should be realized that there is a difference between direct interference and endeavours to influence other governments in, among other things, the way they treat their minorities. And there is nothing unethical in stipulating certain conditions when giving development aid when these conditions refer to the position of the weakest group in society. On the contrary one might say. But even interference cannot be completely excluded on legal grounds, especially not in the case of genocide and severe oppression of national minorities.

(d) *Realism* : "It would be against the interests of the people themselves to create false hopes by supporting them in their struggle". Indeed, external support to liberation movements may not only be ineffective but even counterproductive. It may lead to the severest forms of oppression in the name of the integrity of the state and national security. A certain stage of the struggle in Biafra be cited as an example. As an outsider one cannot get away from evaluating the prospects of the struggle. But even so one must take care to avoid too simplistic a reasoning in terms of effectivity. In many cases the real aims are more modest and restricted than the declared aims, e.g. the conquest of certain fundamental rights or of some kind of autonomy, as a 'next best', or 'mini' option in the back of

the struggling party's mind. From a strategic point of view this can be a very rational policy. From the point of view of political morality one should realize that, when survival and the fundamentals of self-respect are at stake, it is up to the people themselves to decide whether they wish to fight or not.

4. Structural Causes

As we have already observed, the universality of the pattern of oppression of national minorities should primarily be explained by the universality of the process behind it, namely the process of the development of the nation-state as the basic macro-social and political unit in today's world. Oppression of others is no doubt as old as man himself: oppression between tribes within the structures of the great ancient empires and the not so ancient colonial systems. The system of the sovereign nation-state provides a new type of oppression of peoples, with specific patterns and mechanisms, specific 'rules of the game', and specific denials and rationalizations. There are certain aspects of this process which need further examination.

(a) We should realize that the present form of the nation-state is neither arbitrary, nor accidental. Its size, its inner rationality and its basic ideology correspond to a certain level of productivity and certain modes of production. Whether one likes it or not, everybody has to live in a nation-state today and there is no room for a nostalgic longing for a society organized on tribal principles. Certain foundations of the present economic system, e.g. the monetary system, a certain level of education and the material infrastructure can only be realized in the structure of the modern nation-state.

(b) The nation-state can by definition only survive on a common identity and certain shared values. This is obvious, and may be considered the crux of the problem of national minorities. It should also be obvious, however, that these requirements work in two directions: the dominant majority should also be ready to create real opportunities to develop

this feeling of common identity within the nation as a whole, and to participate in shared value system.

(c) Heterogenous nations have an added handicap in developing such a common identity. And it should be realized that any basic identity or fundamental value system can only develop on the basis of existing, historically-developed social identities and value systems. Nobody who claims to have any social and political understanding would deny the importance of Islam and Bengali culture for the development of Bangladesh as a nation-state. But it is precisely because of this that the religious and cultural background of the minority people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts should be taken seriously.

(d) In some cases the ethnic, cultural and religious background of the minority is so different from the majority (e.g. the black minority in South Sudan, the Tamils of northern Sri Lanka and the Papuans in west New Guinea) that only a federal structure, or some well-defined rights or regional autonomy will be feasible. In my opinion the people of the Chittagong Hills certainly belong to this category.

(e) In general we would like to argue that it would be wrong to interpret the problem of the oppressed national minorities as something which is mainly a matter of idealism or good intentions. It has everything to do with the viability of the nation-state, which is, as we have tried to make clear, the corner-stone of the world system. While the problems of the Third World remain largely unresolved and will remain a major challenge to our generation and many to come, the problems of the 'Fourth World' are equally important, even though most people are still unaware of their existence.

5. Strategies

(a) I have interpreted the problem of the people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts as an example of the wider problem of identity denial and denial of a right to social, economic and political participation. It is clear that they can only preserve and develop their own identity by organizing themselves and

thus making themselves heard. Since effective political representation within the political system of Bangladesh is hardly possible, the development of an unofficial, or even illegal, type of political representation has become almost inevitable. Such defiance of the moral and legal basis of the political system itself is not restricted to the case of the Chittagong Hill Tracts but occurs among many other oppressed minorities all over the world, e.g. the well-known case of the black people of South Africa who have developed the ANC and the UDF as their major organizations. The case of the ANC and the UDF shows that private organizations as well as governments have many ways in which to deal with liberation movements, and that these certainly need not imply official or legal recognition.

Unofficial contacts should not, however, imply exclusivity. I recommend to consider the major minority organization, the *Shanti Bahini*, as a serious informant, but not as our only informant. I wish to stress the importance of representation and information. *Limited funds* should be made available to cover the cost of travel and the like. It would be premature, however, to decide now on further financial aid.

(b) Outsiders are now severely handicapped by a lack of reliable information. This hampers the development of adequate policies by governmental and non-governmental organizations. In this light it is essential to support the initiative, taken by the IWGIA (International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs) in Copenhagen and the Organizing Committee to send an *international committee of experts* to the Chittagong Hills in order to investigate.

(c) Clearly the implications for *foreign aid* are that there should be no reason at all for donor governments and non-governmental organizations to restrain from asking special guarantees to the effect that their aid should not be used, either directly or indirectly, in policies—such as repression and settlement of Bengalis—which harm the indigenous population of the Chittagong Hill Tracts. For a further elaboration of this aspect we would like to refer to Chapter 6.

(d) Finally, a category that needs special attention is that of refugees. In tune with world-wide developments, the number of refugees from the Chittagong Hill Tracts is increasing, and they live in the dreariest and most desperate circumstances.

Peter Idenburg
Coordinator R.I.O.P.
(Research Institute of
Oppressed Peoples)

APPENDIX IV

AN OPEN LETTER

*To Lt. General Ershad, Chief Martial-Law
Administrator of Bangladesh
On His October 3 Proclamation*

Most Honourable Chief Martial-law Administrator

Your Proclamation as Chief Martial-law Administrator of Bangladesh from the Rangamati Stadium in Chittagong Hill Tracts on October 3, 1983 was heard by the Shanti Bahini or the Jana Samhati Samity with extreme pleasure. From this High Power Proclamation it is evident that the problems and affairs of Chittagong Hill Tracts have posed a national crisis to your country.

You have proclaimed to the so called "misguided tribal youths" a General Amnesty attended with Rs. 5000/- each and a yearlong weekly ration of 21 seers. You have also offered them Rs. 7000/- for each L.M.G., Rs. 5000/- for each S.M.C./S.M.G., Rs. 3000/- for each Rifle, Rs. 1000/- for each Pistol, Rs. 100/- for each Granade of Pound of explosive and Re 1/- for each Bullet, besides lofty Rehabilitation, and proclaimed. "The easier we can assimilate the misguided youngmen, the sooner shall all the problems be resolved!" It was, as it were, you and your Government were determined to build a paradise for the Jumma Peoples of Chittagong Hill Tracts!

But Honourable Sire, you have nowhere declared your Problems themselves! Instead you have proclaimed, "Government have declared Chittagong Hill Tracts a Special Economic

Zone!" and "Only for Chittagong Hill Tracts a Five Year Plan has been undertaken!" etc.

Hon'ble General, the members of the Shanti-Bahini/Jana Samhati Samity have not been moving underground with begging bowls to feast in jungle hideouts for years together. The members of the Shanti Bahini did not take up Arms in order to make good trade with your Government at high premium.

Hon'ble Chief Martial-law Administrator, you have tried enormously to torture your predecessors by proclaiming— "For long, this area was neglected, and was deprived of developments; I want to resolve all those deprivations!" But do you and your Government propose to recompense the deprivations of the Jumma Peoples of Chittagong Hill Tracts from their Rights, Safeguards and very Existence—

by illegal infiltration of thousands of Mussalmans into this Non-Muslim area and forcefully giving them lands ?

by forcing in such enactments as would legalize Muslim occupation of lands in Chittagong Hill Tracts ?

by sending enormous Military Expeditions into our entire area ?

by imprisoning the Jumma Peoples into the so called 'Collective' and 'Ideal' Villages for making room for Mussulmans ?

Then you rose a step further on humane rapture and declared, "We are part and parcel of a same race! Our relation is a blood relation" where we could read your terrible writing on the wall that you will in no time, liquidate the ethnic identity, traditional, linguistic and cultural distinction of the Jumma Peoples.

You have been costatic in proclaiming. "The Britishmade Hill Tracts Manual of 1900 A. D. today awaits modification, reformation and thorough development. Government shall

present a revised Manual suited to the Hills People without delay". But you and your Government know that your previous Governments had been in successive plots cunningly to steal and infringe the rights and safeguards of the Jumma Peoples embodied in the Manual of 1900 A.D. with the set purpose of crushing the racial, religious, cultural and traditional identity and distinction destroying the very security and existence of the Ethnic Minority Nationalities of Chittagong Hill Tracts. Consequently, the Jumma Peoples were compelled to organize a Movement for ensuring their National Identity and the integrity of their Motherland. But circumstances so led them that at last, a full decade ago, they had to take to Arms in demand of Self-determination.

The wide world knows that the Governments of Bangladesh had been waging a Regular Warfare in secret against the Jana Samhati Samity, that is, the Jumma Peoples of Chittagong Hill Tracts where 50% of the Bangladesh Forces have been deployed. But you have bluffed the world saying that it was just an internal law & order situation of Bangladesh.

And, today, from an innocent platform, you are pleased to announce a so called 'revised Manual' for the Jumma Peoples without any consultation with them, behind which you have the same sinister motive of your predecessors to abolish the protective laws of the Hill Tracts Manual of 1900, with a novel trickery.

BUT

Most Exalted Chief Martial-law Administrator,

On October 3, 1900, in Rangamati, with authoritative pride, you did proclaim :—

"My Proclamation of this Amnesty—is not a sign of weakness ! If need be, I will continue to WAR for hundred thousand years ! I will preserve my country's Independence and Sovereignty !"

Good Sir, for the first time, you and your Government are pleased to Confess that the Bangladesh Forces are engaged in a Regular Warfare against the Shanti Bahini of the Parbatya Chattagram Jana Samhti Samity with the Independence and Sovereignty of Bangladesh at stake ! This Confession of your honour has, doubtlessly added to the dignity of the Jumma Peoples.

But why this WAR ?

What do the Jumma Peoples want ? And why is the Jana Samhati Samity engaged in a WAR of Selfdetermination ?

That, Sir, in consonance with your predecessors, you and your Government had never minded to investigate and appreciate these Fundamental Questions, and that you are decidedly unwilling to solve the Problems of the Jumma Peoples on Principle and Justice—has been very clearly proved by your October 3 Proclamation, an embodiment of—Surreptitious plans, Election Demagogy, Political Debauchery and Henious Conspiracy—which may only create a temporary confusion, but, by which the Demand of the Jumma Peoples for Selfdetermination can never be subsided.

The War of Selfdetermination shall run unabated.

Thanking you,
Central Executive,
Jana Samhati Samity,
Chittagong Hill Tracts.

November 25, 1983.

APPENDIX V

*Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington DC 20515
November 13, 1992.*

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia
c/o Embassy of Bangladesh
2201 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 300
Washington, D.C. 20007

Dear Madame Prime Minister

We, Members of the United States House of Representatives, are writing to express our strong concern over reports of a massacre in the Chittogong Hill Tracts of your country.

According to reliable reports, on April 10, 1992, the town of Logong in the Chittagong Hill Tracts was surrounded by Bengali settlers accompanied by paramilitary forces. The inhabitants of the town were then systematically murdered. Military officials in Khagrachari admit to over 130 dead; estimates from Amnesty International and Human Rights Organizations in Bangladesh range up to 600 or more. Eyewitnesses report that the entire village was burned to the ground.

We are shocked and upset by these reports, which suggest the killing of innocent victims on a tremendous scale. The continuing effort to subdue the people of the Chittagong Hill Tracts has been marked by repeated accusations that govern-

ment security forces have violated the basic human rights of the inhabitants of that area. Reports of torture, rape, and extrajudicial execution have been common for several years.

Although we understand that your government is engaged in an ongoing conflict with the armed opposition group Shanti Bahini rebellion can never be an excuse for murdering civilians, much less full-scale massacre. We call on your government to undertake an immediate, full, and impartial investigation into these reports, and to punish those responsible.

We are also concerned that these events are part of a larger pattern in your country of mistreatment of religious minorities. The establishment of Islam as the state religion continues to cause concern among Hindu, Christian, and Buddhist minorities; reports of attacks on religious minorities are common. Furthermore, several million Bangladeshi Buddhists remain refugees in India.

The time has come for the government of Bangladesh to take action in rectifying this situation, in line with its position as a constitutional democracy and a responsible member of the world community. Great changes have taken place in your country in the last two years, changes that are applauded by democracies throughout the world. Action on these issues will show your commitment to upholding international human and civil rights standards. We look forward to a response from your government to our concerns.

Sincerely

APPENDIX VI

Intervention of the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs and Anti-Slavery International on the Situation in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh.

United Nations Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, August, 1992 ;

Agenda Item 6: The Violation of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

Intervention by Professor Douglas Sanders, Faculty of Law, University of British Columbia, Vancouver Canada.

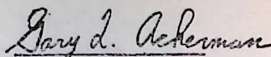
This intervention, on behalf of the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs and Anti-Slavery International, concerns the current situation in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh. I was co-chair of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission, which visited the area with the cooperation of the Government of Bangladesh, in December, 1990. We issued a report in May, 1991, and an update in March, 1992.

While Bangladesh has a large Bengali majority, the hill tracts are the traditional home of a number of separate hill peoples, who differ racially, religiously and economically from the peoples of the other parts of the country. As in other parts of the sub-continent, the hill peoples lands were protected during colonial times from outside settlers. That protection continued in practice until after decolonization.

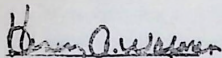
Two major events laid the foundation for the current unrest in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. In 1960 the Kaptai hydro-



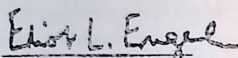
THOMAS M. FOGLIETTA
Member of Congress



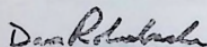
GARY L. ACKERMAN
Member of Congress



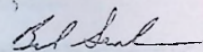
HENRY A. WAXMAN
Member of Congress



ELIOT L. ENGEL
Member of Congress



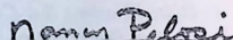
DANA ROHRBACHER
Member of Congress



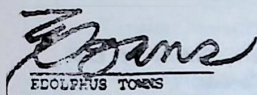
BERNARD SANDERS
Member of Congress



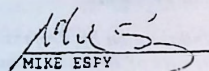
CHRISTOPHER E. SMITH
Member of Congress



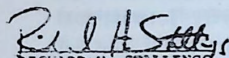
NANCY PELOSI
Member of Congress



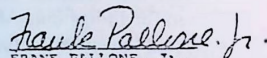
EDOLPHUS TORRES
Member of Congress



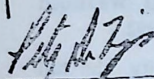
MIKE ESPY
Member of Congress



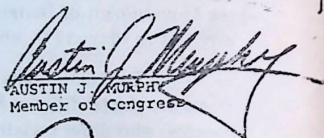
RICHARD H. STALLINGS
Member of Congress



FRANK FALLONE, Jr.
Member of Congress



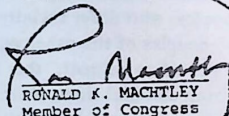
PETER A. DEFATIO
Member of Congress



AUSTIN J. MURPHY
Member of Congress



CONSTANCE A. MORELLA
Member of Congress



RONALD K. MACTLEY
Member of Congress



MICHAEL R. McNULTY
Member of Congress

electric project uprooted one third of the tribal population, flooding a large area of rich agricultural valley lands. Compensation and rehabilitation were completely inadequate, something not now disputed by civil and military officials in Bangladesh.

On top of the major disruption of the Kaptai dam, the national government sponsored a transmigration policy, under which Bengali settlers were given grants of land and other aid to relocate in the Hill Tracts. This government sponsored resettlement created direct competition between Bengali settlers and hill people for land.

It used to be common for Bangladesh government representatives to describe the hill people as nomadic, swidden [slash and burn] agriculturalists, who had no settled patterns of land ownership. Having heard such official statements, I was surprised to discover that the lands of the hill people had been extensively documented under the relevant land laws of Bangladesh. They held the same kinds of land documents as other citizens for their homes, orchards, paddy rice fields and even, sometimes, for swidden areas.

It was clear that the Bengali settlement had not been restricted to vacant lands, but had displaced established land rights of the hill people. Hill people were losing lands that they could claim under Bangladesh law, under traditional rights and under the provisions of ILO Convention 107, to which Bangladesh is a signatory.

Such a displacement could not take place peacefully. Accounts of military and settler attacks on hill people and their villages began to appear. We heard scores of such stories directly from refugees. The hill people created an armed resistance group, the Shanti Bahini and a political party, the JSS.

The response of the government of Bangladesh was the increased militarization of the area. When my commission visited the CHT in December, 1990, the militarization of the area was amazingly extensive. Military officials told us about

their roles in economic development, distribution of relief, building of infrastructure, including roads and schools, charitable work, even the settlement of land disputes (for which they had no formal authority under Bangladesh law). Military camps and check points were everywhere. We counted over 20 check points during a 30 minute drive on a road north of Khagrachari. All roads were under a military curfew from 5 p.m. to 10 a.m.

The military leaders were very well trained and spoke excellent English. They hosted us, gave us presents and described their training in counterinsurgency. They had studied the strategies of the United Kingdom in Malaya and of the United States in Vietnam.

The violence in the Chittagong Hill Tracts has produced a refugee population of over 50,000 in the Indian State of Tripura. A pattern developed of attacks on hill people, military or settlers, followed by retaliatory attacks. These patterns came to be described in periodic reports of Amnesty International, the International Work Group on Indigenous Peoples, Anti-Slavery, and other non-governmental organizations.

We were told by military officials in the CHT that they were now able to prevent retaliatory attacks. A major part of their strategy involved the forcible relocation of hill people into "cluster villages". An Asian Development Bank funded rubber plantation project meshed with this strategy, for it involved the relocation of hill people from their traditional lands to new settlements. I am told that the ADB funding for this project was ended last year. Bengali settlers, as well, were often relocated into cluster villages for protection and control.

The government had a set of new policies :

1. Further settlement in the hills was prohibited by controlling the availability of land titles, a clear reversal of government policy.

2. Three hill councils were established in the name of autonomy. They were unlike other local government councils in Bangladesh in that
 - (a) they were elected,
 - (b) they had specified representation, with a tribal majority on each council, and
 - (c) they had more authority than local government councils in other parts of Bangladesh.
3. The military aimed at preventing retaliatory attacks, in order to isolate the Shanti Bahini as the only perpetrator of violence in the CHT.

The stated policy of preventing attacks by military and settlers has failed. Attacks and killings have continued sporadically. The latest major incident occurred in the village of Logang on April 10th, 1992. According to Amnesty International, reports indicate several hundred hill people were killed. Our sources confirm this figure. Amnesty describes the attack as apparently in reprisal for the killing of a Bengali youth by the Shanti Bahini. The Bangladesh Government has appointed Justice Sultan Hossain Khan to investigate the incident. On two previous occasions the government has appointed inquiries into major incidents of killings—the Kaukali and Longadu incidents of 1980 and 1989. The reports of those investigations have never been made public despite repeated requests. Such secrecy seems to confirm the hill peoples versions of the events.

Three weeks ago there was another incident. According to news accounts, four security men were killed by Shanti Bahini.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia has said that she favours a political rather than a military solution. She has appointed a nine member committee on the issues. Excluded from the committee are the elected members of Parliament from the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Those three individuals are not members of her political party.

An account in the Guardian newspaper of August 4th states that the Shanti Bahini has rejected all previous offers to resolve the conflict, insisting that troops must be withdrawn from the area before talks can start. This statement is incorrect. There have been meetings in the past, which are documented in our report, and the JSS has continued to call for a resumption of negotiations.

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's statement and the establishment of a committee may sound positive. But I am painfully aware that President Ershad also publicly said he favoured a political solution. I am painfully aware of the history of the ILO repeatedly suggesting to the Bangladesh government that it at least establish an inter-ministerial committee to co-ordinate and assess policies in the CHT. I am painfully aware of the high level committee which conducted negotiations with the JSS, but cut the process short, opting instead for an agreement with a segment of the Hill People and the quick enactment of the Hill Council laws.

I am afraid that nothing appears to have really changed.

What should be done ?

1. There must be a demilitarization of the Chittagong Hill Tracts. The government must be serious about the stated goal of a political, not a military solution. As an obvious first step, non-military functions, such as economic development, should be turned over to non-military authorities.

2. The issue of land titles in the CHT must be addressed by an expert and impartial body. Refugees will not return to the Hill Tracts from India unless they can re-establish themselves on their traditional lands. Bengali settlers will be displaced in this process, for many families are living on stolen land. Foreign assistance should be available for the rehabilitation of those settler families, to enable these problems to be solved.

3. The CHT must have sufficient autonomy within Bangladesh. There is a dispute whether that should involve one or three hill councils. But there can be no dispute that autonomy

requires greater powers than have been envisaged for the Hill Councils so far.

4. There needs to be international monitoring of the situation. We call again for a special rapporteur to monitor the situation in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

Bangladesh is a poor country, which has often suffered from natural disasters. But Bangladeshis are spirited, lively and energetic. The continuing violence in the Chittagong Hill Tracts is a great tragedy. Bangladesh needs to address the situation honestly and directly. Bangladeshis had not hide behind their poverty and their other problems when the evidence is clear on the oppression and violence directed against the hill people.

APPENDIX VII

*Statement of Bimal Bhikkhu
To the General Assembly of the United Nations*

*On the Occasion of the Launch of the International Year
For the World's Indigenous People*

10 December 1992

Mr Chairman, Sisters and Brothers,

Please allow me to speak a few words in my own language :

Jou Bandhulak (Greetings, dear friends).

Mui Bangladeshar Parbatya Chattagramma Ekjon Chakma Bouddha Bhikku (I am a Buddhist Monk from the Chakma tribes of the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh). *Jou* (Thank you).

My mother-tongue is really the only thing which has been left to me. I have already lost my land, my traditional way of life, my family and my friends...

Today, the 10th of December 1992, is finally a day which marks a *Resurrection of Hope* for millions of people designated as indigenous or tribal.

Let me present the situation of these people of Asia as I have seen it.

Throughout Asia you will find indigenous and tribal people. Their lives have become a daily nightmare, an ocean of suffer-

ing. It is only the intensity which varies from one country to another, from one moment to another.

The problems have the same roots : *non-respect for human beings and their rights*. There is no respect for culture, religions traditions. The present situation of the indigenous and tribal peoples of Asia is not just a "problem" *it is a drama which dishonours the human condition and changes must be made.*

The situation has become so intolerable that there is increasing violence, provoking even more misery. But I have not come to complain nor to seek out the guilty. I have come to propose four *actions* to lessen suffering and to build peace :

A. The Right to Truth

It is only by having the true situation known that we will be able to transform it. I, therefore, ask that the Working Group on Indigenous Populations be made a permanent part of the human rights bodies of the United Nations.

The members of the Working Group should be able to travel freely to see the reality in our areas and to make their findings public to the world's media as well as to the United Nations.

Currently the truth of the situation is too often hidden. *Our only force is truthful information.*

Our lives are menaced because our situation is often unknown. Thus the Working Group should have offices in many countries so that indigenous people can contact them. We will then be able to live in harmony with all the world.

B. The Right to Land

Precise territory must be set out for indigenous and tribal people. We do not want to be a "museum for anthropologists" but we wish to be able to choose our style and speed of development.

Thus the Working Group should encourage each parliament in Asia to *guarantee through laws our right to land*. The Working Group should monitor that these laws are respected.

Yet in our eyes, the most precious resource is the *human person* : We wish to see harmonious development of the human potential : physical, intellectual, psychological and spiritual.

C. The Right to Life and to Justice

We must put an end to massacres and prevent armed conflicts.

When there is killing or rape, the law must be respected and the accused brought to justice. The Working Group should encourage respect for law and its re-establishment when it has been weakened.

The "Impunity" of guilty parties is an insult to Justice and Dignity.

In order to avoid armed conflicts, there should be *training in active non-violence* as taught and practised by Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King. We therefore ask that the Working Group organize such training, drawing upon such people as the Venerable Thich Nhat Hanh, Sulak Siveraksa and Adolfo Perez Esquivel, and such specialized organizations as the International Fellowship of Reconciliation.

D. The Rights of the Child

You have had the wisdom to recognize the Rights of the Child by an international convention in 1989.

For indigenous people, our children are our only hope. I therefore ask that UNICEF help to implement the rights of the children of indigenous and tribal people...especially the right to education.

I therefore ask UNESCO to mark 1993 by giving scholarships for higher education to indigenous and tribal youth. If

their potential is fully developed, these young people will help the whole of world society.

I also ask UNESCO to help preserve and enrich our culture and religions—our identity and way of life. We are all human beings, not superior or inferior. We have so many things to learn from others in the Human Community, and we can also share our values. We have to realise that we inter-are what you do has an impact on us; what we do has an impact on you. Our children are already carrying a very heavy burden: a financial “debt” to the richest countries. For me, this burden is really an injustice against those children.

Conclusions

We, indigenous and tribal people, must also recognize our past mistakes. For instance, we have not fully respected the dignity and rights of the women in our communities. Through education, UNESCO must help to promote the rights of women in our societies.

We must also learn to renounce. We share a planet with other societies and we must learn to live together in harmony. We are different, but not enemies. Rather we have common enemies to fight together: ignorance, fear, hatred and violence.

We can be mutually enriched by our differences. In fact, it is the diversity which creates our richness. The path of reconciliation between our peoples must involve respect for justice.

There is no Way to Peace : Peace is the Way.

Thus the United Nations must promote a *new human culture*—that of non-violence based on the respect of the person, truth and the rule of law.

Thank you for your efforts to know us, to recognise us and understand us.

This cry of distress, by your help becomes today, this 10th of December, a cry of hope from my heart.

Sabbe Satta Sukhita Hontu

May All Beings Be Happy

c/o Partage,

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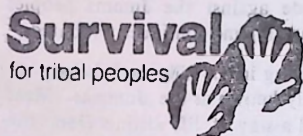
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Abbreviations

NEHU	= North Eastern Hill University
CHT	= Chittagong Hill Tracts
SB	= Shanti Bahini
AI	= Amnesty International
BSF	= Border Security Force
BDR	= Bangladesh Regiment
JSS	= Jana Sanghati Samiti

APPENDIX VIII



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Survival international is a worldwide movement to support tribal peoples. It stands for their right to decide their own future and helps them protect their lands, environment and way of life.

Submission to the 1992 Session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights by Survival International

On April 10, one of the most horrific atrocities against tribal peoples took place in the Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh. Hundreds of men, women and children were locked in their homes and burnt alive in the village of Logang in Khagrachari district. The attack was led by the local security forces and aided by the military and Bengali settlers.

Though the scale of this recent massacre is unprecedented, this is not an isolated incident. Over the last 20 years Survival

International has regularly received reports of murder, torture arson and rape—almost everyday occurrences for the Jummas. In 1991 alone there were over 600 well documented cases of atrocities against the Jumma peoples of the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT).

Although parliamentary democracy was restored in Bangladesh with the election of a new Government last year, the CHT remains heavily militarised. There are currently 50,000 military and para-military personnel deployed in the hill tracts. The policy of genocide against the Jumma peoples followed by the previous military regime continues unabated.

The 600,000 tribes people living in the hill tracts belong to several tribes and are collectively known as the Jummas. Most of them are Buddhists and lead a way of life distinct from the Muslim majority in Bangladesh. The Bangladeshi Government sees the Jummas as backward and primitive and its policies attempt to assimilate the tribes into mainstream culture. Since the late 1970s the Government has moved over 400,000 Bengali settlers from the plains onto lands of the tribal peoples of Chittagong Hill Tracts. Tens of thousands of Jummas have been killed by the military and the hill people are being forced to adopt Bengali culture. The Jummas are being systematically destroyed as a people.

Having failed to achieve a political or legal solution of their problem through talks with the Government, a minority of the tribals formed 'Shanti Bahini' (peace force), which has fought back against the Bangladeshi invasion. As a result all tribals are now subject to indiscriminate and violent reprisal by the army.

Over 50,000 Jummas live in refugee camps across the border in India. Those people who have not fled to the jungle or to India have been forced to submit to the Government relocation programme. The hill tribes have been moved into cluster villages designed to keep the Jummas under military surveillance and supposedly protect them from guerrilla attacks. The Government has kept the hill tracts closed to all outsiders

particularly journalists, and the atrocities committed against the tribals remain shrouded in secrecy.

Survival International urges the Commission to take action to halt the gross human rights violations against the Jumma peoples and to demilitarise the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Furthermore, we urge the Commission to call upon the Bangladeshi Government to actively seek a peaceful, political solution to this problem that recognises and upholds the Jummas rights to their own lands.

APPENDIX IX

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

BANGLADESH

Reprisal Killings in Logong, Chittagong Hill Tracts, in April 1992

May 1992

Summary

AI INDEX: 13/04/92

DISTR: SC/CO

Amnesty International has received reports that several hundred tribal inhabitants of Logong village in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh were killed on 10 April, 1992. The deaths apparently occurred in reprisal for a killing of a Bengali youth by members of the *Shanti Bahini* an armed tribal opposition group.

Amnesty International is concerned that some of those killed may have been the victims of extrajudicial executions, deliberate and intentional killings of defenceless people by law enforcement personnel, including paramilitary forces. The paramilitary Bangladesh Rifles reportedly arrived on the spot shortly after the killing had begun and did nothing to stop it.

Amnesty International urges the Government of Bangladesh promptly to initiate a full, independent and impartial inquiry

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United Kingdom.

into the reported killings in Logong. It should establish the circumstances in which the killings took place and whether any of the killings were the result of unlawful and unnecessary use of lethal force by the security forces. The reported failure of the Bangladesh Rifles to take any preventive action should also be investigated. The result of such an inquiry should be made public at the earliest opportunity. Amnesty International urges the Government of Bangladesh to ensure that members of the security forces alleged to be responsible for extrajudicial executions are brought to justice.

Keywords : Indigenous Peoples Extrajudicial Execution
Civil Defence/Armed Civilians/Paramilitaries Military
Communal Violence/Non-Governmental Entities, AI
and Governments/Aged/Women/Children/Investigation
of Abuses.

This report summarizes a 5-page document. *Bangladesh : Reprisal killings in Logong, Chirtagong Hill Tracts, in April 1992* (AI Index : ASA 13/04/92), issued by Amnesty International in May 1992. Anyone wanting further details or take action should consult the full document.

APPENDIX X

BANGLADESH

Reprisal Killings in Logong, Chittagong Hill Tracts, in April 1992

Amnesty International has received reports that several hundred defenceless tribal inhabitants of Logong village in the Chittagong Hill Tracts were killed on 10 April 1992. The deaths apparently occurred in reprisal for a killing of a Bengali youth by members of the *Shanti Bahini* (Peace Force), an armed tribal opposition group.

Amnesty International is concerned that some of those killed may have been victims of extrajudicial executions, that is deliberate and intentional killings by the security forces. Amnesty International is also greatly concerned about the apparent resumption of large-scale reprisal killings. Reprisal killings by the security forces were reported to Amnesty International in earlier years, for instance in August 1988 when soldiers were reported to have extrajudicially executed tribal villagers in Baghai Chari following a *Shanti Bahini* attack on an army patrol. In May 1989 members of the Village Defence Party (VDP) were reported to have tortured and killed non-combatant tribal villagers in Langadu in reprisal for a killing of a Bengali official by *Shanti Bahini*. Amnesty International reported on these incidents in 1990 (see *Bangladesh: Reprisal killings of tribal people in the Chittagong Hill Tracts in May 1989*, AI Index: ASA 13/02/90 and *Bangladesh: Reprisal killings of tribal people in the Chittagong Hill Tracts in May 1989—An update*, AI Index: ASA 13/05/90). The Government of Bangladesh subsequently informed Amnesty International

that the August 1988 killings had occurred as a result of "civil commotion" following an exchange between insurgents and the security forces and that the killings in May 1989 were committed in a spontaneous outburst by non-tribal people which the security forces had tried to contain. Members of the VDP had participated in the rioting, but according to the government, they had done so "as individuals...and not in an organized manner". Criminal charges were said to have been brought against 39 alleged perpetrators, but Amnesty International has been unable to ascertain the specific charges brought against them.

Background

The Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh are a sparsely populated area in which successive governments of Bangladesh have sought to resettle non-tribal people from the densely populated plains. The indigenous tribal people have felt threatened by this migration and since the mid-1970s the *Shanti Bahini*, the armed wing of the tribal political organization, the *Jana Sanghati Samiti*, (JSS. People's Solidarity Association), has fought an armed battle for regional autonomy. It has attacked and killed scores of military and paramilitary personnel stationed in the Chittagong Hill Tracts as well as non-tribal Bengali settlers. In turn, the security forces have reportedly undertaken reprisal attacks on non-combatant tribal villagers and killed many. Bengali civilian settlers in the Chittagong Hill Tracts have also reportedly attacked tribal, villagers often with complicity or acquiescence of the security forces.

Amnesty International has raised its concerns about human rights violations in the Chittagong Hill Tracts with successive governments of Bangladesh. In August 1991 it published a document which described torture and extrajudicial executions of non-combatant tribal inhabitants of the Chittagong Hill Tracts by security forces during 1989 and 1990 (see *Bangladesh: Human rights in the Chittagong Hill Tracts, 1989-1990*, AI Index: ASA 13/04/91) and urged the Government of Bangladesh to implement preventive measures against future human

rights violations in the Chittagong Hill Tracts and to pursue investigations into past violations. In December 1991 Amnesty International issued an update (see *Bangladesh : Human rights violations in the Chittagong Hill Tracts: an update*, AI Index: ASA 13/09/91). It described reported cases of unacknowledged detention, detention without trial, torture and deaths in custody, including possible extrajudicial executions. The Government of Bangladesh has not responded to the concern raised in these reports.

Amnesty International condemns as a matter of principle the killing and torture of prisoners by anyone, including the human rights abuses committed by opposition groups such as the *Shanti Bahini*. Amnesty International's work is based on international human rights standards, which are binding on governments. Governments bear the responsibility for bringing all those who have committed criminal offences to justice and in doing so must ensure that basic human rights are protected. Violence by opposition groups can never absolve governments of their responsibility under international law to uphold fundamental human rights. In particular, the right to life and to be free from torture must be upheld at all times.

Reprisal Killing in Logong

Logong in Panchari Upazilla, Khagrachari district, is a so-called "cluster village" in which tribal people from several far-flung hamlets were resettled in 1989-1990 as part of the government's counter-insurgency policy. In "cluster villages" the tribal population can be subject to closer surveillance, and the *Shanti Bahini* are cut off from a supply line within the local community. Logong consisted of about 600 houses with as many families. A camp of the Bangladesh Rifles is located just 250 yards from the village : Panchari military camp is about five miles away.

Accounts of the anticident of the killings vary widely. A young Bengali died, either in a *Shanti Bahini* attack or after being injured during an attempted assault on some tribal women. His death was apparently attributed to *Shanti Bahini* activities.

and caused the Bengali settlers together with the Village Defence Party (VDP), a civilian force with official status, and the paramilitary Ansars to attack Logong at around noon on 10 April 1992. They reportedly surrounded the village, herded the villagers into their homes and set fire to them. Hundreds were reportedly burned alive, while villagers who attempted to flee were reportedly shot dead. The paramilitary Bangladesh Rifles reportedly arrived on the spot shortly after the killings had begun, but did nothing to stop them. According to eye-witness reports, members of the Bangladesh Rifles surrounded the village and prevented people from getting away and others from going near the dead, dying and injured.

Amnesty International is particularly concerned about the scale of the killings. Reports consistently speak of hundreds of dead, but Amnesty International has not been able to independently verify these numbers. The tribal chairman of the Khagrachari District Council on 11 April visited the area, but was not permitted to see more than a restricted part of Logong where he saw 138 bodies ready for cremation. He and other local leaders were refused access to other parts of the village. They reportedly saw truckloads of other bodies being taken away. A group of visitors from Dhaka, including human rights activists, lawyers, journalists, legislators and the Deputy Attorney General of Bangladesh, was in the vicinity of Logong at the time of the incident to participate in a tribal festival. Though its members were prevented from fully investigating the killings, they spoke to a number of eye-witnesses. When they met with Brigadier Sharif Aziz in Khagrachari on 13 April, he reportedly admitted that the number of 138 dead reported to the group by the tribal leader was correct. A Joint Statement issued by some members of the group on 19 April, taking into account the various eye-witness accounts, said, "more than 400 houses were burnt to ashes and more than 200 children, women and elders were killed".

Survivors of the killings reported to members of the group of visitors that they had seen mothers feeding their children being shot dead and children being thought alive into the

flames. A 17-year old witness reported he had seen three children being thrown into the fire. A local Bengali doctor who went to the spot to help the injured reportedly said he counted 300 dead bodies and then could not bear the sight any longer. Another tribal person who escaped but whose wife was killed reported that when he returned to Logong to blaim his wife's body on 11 April, he saw 39 bodies ready for cremation. He found his wife's body but was not permitted to remove it for cremation. Many of the survivors said that they had also seen dead bodies in the forest around the village.

Drivers of military trucks carrying dead bodies are by a local human rights group reported to have said that on the trucks among the dead there were injured people crying for help. The drivers reportedly did not divulge where the bodies were taken. They said, however, that the dead and injured were burned together.

Brigadier Sharif Aziz, commander of the Khagrachari cantonment, was allegedly informed of the incident at 8 pm on 10 April and reached Logong three hours later. He reported to the national press on 11 April that he found 11 dead bodies in Logong, of which ten were tribal dead and one Bengali dead. He said the killings had resulted from a *Shanti Bahini* attack and the ensuing fight between *Shanti Bahini* and local Bengalis.

The Chittagong Hill Tracts Students Association and the Chittagong Hill Tracts People's Association in a public statement on the killings issued on 14 April identified several people, including members of the Ansars and the VDP, who allegedly took part in the killings.

Official statements about the incident refer to 13 dead and 14 missing. International news agencies reported defence sources as saying that 12 tribal people were killed and 16 injured in an incident sparked by *Shanti Bahini* activities. Major General Mahmudul Hasan, regional commander in southeastern Bangladesh and in charge of the 24 Infantry Division, said in an interview with Reuters news agency that

the gunbattle in Logong had been sparked by *Shanti Bahini* activities and that 13 people had been killed and 34 injured. He is reported to have said: "Human rights are strictly enforced in the Chittagong Hill Tracts...it is the only area in Bangladesh where law enforcing agencies respond very quickly to complaints of any sort of irregularity". Bangladesh Finance Minister Saifur Rahman, commenting on a demonstration against the alleged mass killings during the donor countries' meeting in Paris on 22 April, said the charges were totally untrue and added that similar accusations of repression in the Chittagong Hill Tracts had been made during the previous year's donor countries' meeting. "It is a contrived situation to embarrass my delegation here". Rahman said.

Amnesty International's Concerns and Recommendations

Amnesty International is concerned that some of those killed may have been victims of extrajudicial executions and that many of the injured may have been victims of attempted extrajudicial executions. Extrajudicial executions violate provisions of the constitution of Bangladesh as also a number of international human rights standards.

Extrajudicial executions violate Article 32 of the Constitution of Bangladesh which states that: "No person shall be deprived of life or personal liberty save in accordance with law." Extrajudicial executions are strictly prohibited by Article 6(1) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which states: "Every human being has the inherent right to life. This shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life." Principle 1 of the Principles for the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-Legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions lays down:

"Governments shall prohibit by law all extra-judicial, arbitrary and summary executions and shall ensure that any such executions are recognized as offences under their criminal laws, and are punishable by appropriate

penalties which take into account the seriousness of the offences. Exceptional circumstances including a state of war, internal political instability or any other public emergency may not be invoked as a justification of such executions. Such executions shall not be carried out under any circumstances...".

Amnesty International urgently calls on the Government of Bangladesh promptly to initiate a full, independent and impartial inquiry into the reported killings in Logong. The working methods and aims of the inquiry should fulfil the standards set out in the Principles on the Effective Prevention and Investigation of Extra-Legal, Arbitrary and Summary Executions. The inquiry should establish the circumstances in which the killings took place, and whether any of the killings were the result of unlawful and unnecessary use of lethal force by the security forces, including the Ansars and members of the Village Defence Party. The failure of the Bangladesh Rifles to take any preventive action should also be investigated. The terms of reference and the findings of such an inquiry should be made public at the earliest opportunity. Amnesty International urges the Government of Bangladesh to ensure that members of the security forces alleged to be responsible for extrajudicial executions are brought to justice.

Amnesty International further calls on the government of Bangladesh to ensure that all law enforcement personnel are clearly instructed that lethal force may not be used except in genuine life-threatening circumstances and only as a last resort, in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 17 December 1979, and the Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials, adopted by the Eighth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders in September 1990.

APPENDIX XI

LOGANG DISTURBANCES ENQUIRY

Commission—1992

R E P O R T

On 10th April (Friday) 1992, at about 1 P.M. a very sad and shocking incident took place in village Logong, in Panchari Police-station of the Khagrachari District in Chittagong Hill Tracts. 13 people died and another 13 were injured in course of the incident and nearly 550 hute made of songgrass and bumboos, belonging to the tribal inhabitants were burnt.

The Govt. considering the public importance of the incident and the necessity of an enquiry, constituted a Commission of Enquiry under Commission of Enquiry Act, 1956 and appointed me as the sole member-Chairman of the Commission and referred the following matters for enquiry and report.

I accordingly visited Logang and Khagrachari for inspection of the effected locality and to make the enquiry. I examined several effected persons whose kins have either died or injured in the incident and/or their huts had been burnt. I also examined leaders of the tribal and the non-tribal communities, living in the Hill District. I also examined members of the general public and members of the security forces, namely the Ansars, members of Village Defences Party, shortly named, V.D.P. (irregular local civil forces), the B.D.R. (a para-military force) and the army officers deployed in the locality to combat insurgency activities of Santi Bahini. I have also received views of the local administration in writing, viz, the Divisional

Commissioner, Chittagong Division and the Deputy Commissioners of Khagrachari, one succeeding the other and the Superintendent of Police of the District. I have tried to find out the facts of the incidents in Logang with reasonable certainty by indepth enquiry. Thus I have in all examined or obtained statements of 101 persons.

The first set of witnesses to support the case of the local administration are witness Nos. 1-8. They are either members of V.D.P. or Ansars who were working as irregular civil forces under the command and control of Bangladesh Rifles Company stationed at Logang. They have stated that they are residents of Logang Bazar and were in whole-time employment. They have stated that on 10th of April (Friday) they heard that agitated Bangalee residents of the clustered village near Logang Bazar had come to B.D.R. camp with an injured boy aged between 10/12 years whose throat had been cut by a long curved knife (dao) along with 4 other boys. They were telling that Shanti-Bahini miscreants had attacked the boys while they were grazing their cattle in a field a little away from their village (outside the security perimeter of their village) and that the latter had killed Kabir Ahmed cutting his throat with dao and injured 4 other boys in that place. The agitated Bangalees came to B.D.R. camp and narrated the occurrence whereupon Subedar Habib of B.D.R. Camp asked Habilder-Major Iman Ali to ring the alarm bell. On hearing the alarm bell all Ansars, members of V.D.P. and B.D.R. personnel came to the camp and they were given arms and ammunitions. Ansars and V.D.P. members were each given 303 Rifles had 20 rounds of ammunitions and the B.D.R. personnel were given automatic or Semi-Automatic weapons with ammunitions. All the Ansars and V.D.P. members went away to take position at their posts located around the security perimeter of the clustered village of Bangalees which was about 300 yards away from the village of the Chakma and Tripura tribals, and that, the members of the V.D.P., Ansars and B.D.R. personnel fired towards the south west i.e. where the clustered villages of the tribals were situated and as alleged by the said witnesses, the Shanti Behini had started firing from their firearms from that

direction, and that the Shanti Bahini had as well set fire to the huts of the clustered villages of the tribals. The aforesaid witnesses have assumed that the Shanti Bahini was opposed to the return of the refugee from India and their rehabilitation in clustered villages (which was not suitable for their support and help for conducting insurgency operation inside Bangladesh territory). All the witnesses have admitted, they have fired towards the south west as they were facing (small-arms) fire from that direction but that they have fired above the level of the huts to give cover to the B.D.R. personnel who have gone to that direction to combat the Shanti Bahini men. The aforesaid witnesses have stated that they have in aggregate fired 300/350 rounds of ammunition. They have also stated that the B.D.R. personnel have fired 11 rounds from their ammunition and that there were 33 members of V.D.R. Similarly there were about 20 Ansars who took part in the operation. These witnesses have denied that they fired at the tribals; they have stated that they took positions in their respective posts around the security perimeter of the Bangalees clustered village and fired towards the Shanti Bahinis who were firing at them with arms. They have stated that Shanti Bahini men have fired at them for half an hour and thereafter they retreated towards the Indian border. They have stated that the huts of the tribals were 10/12 feet in breadth and 15/20 feet in width and made of son-grass and bambos. These witnesses have stated that they saw fire in the huts of the tribals no sooner than they took position in their respective posts around the security perimeter of the Bangalee village. These witnesses have stated that they have fired under orders of Subedar Habib as according to them the Shanti Bahini miscreants were firing at them from the south west i.e. behind the hillock upon which the Chakma village was situated. They have stated that the entire village of the Chakma tribals was burnt, and a part of the Tripura village was also destroyed by fire, and that 11 Chakma tribals and one Tripura tribal died in the incident besides one Kabir Hossain who was earlier killed by the Shanti Bahini while he along with others were grazing cattles in a field near the Bangalee clustered village.

In the aforesaid category of witnesses (witness Nos. 1 to 8) who have supported the view of the local administration I find two other important witnesses namely, witness No. 55 Subedar Habibur Rahman who was in-charge of B.D.R. camp and witness No. 57, Nurul Iman who was Habildar-Major of the camp. They have stated that Bangalees came agitated in front of the Mosque with the injured boys while Friday Khudba recited by the Imam had ended; the injured boys have told that they have been attacked by armed miscreants while they were grazing cattle and that one of their boys has been killed. Witness No. 55 the Subedar of the camp at once arranged defensive measures and being armed they approached the place where the Bangalee boys were attacked and one of them killed. He stated that they fired 11 rounds from their arms and by that time he saw that fire had engulfed the Chakma village. Witness No. 55 in cross-examination has stated that he has not given any arms to the Ansars and members of V.D.P. He has stated that Habildar-Major Nurul Iman and Habildar-Major Abul Raham issued arms to the Ansars and V.D.P. and that he went out of the camp with the patrol party to confront the Shanti Bahini before alarm was raised and arms were issued to V.D.P. and Ansars. He has stated that V.D.P. and Ansars have fired out of panic and fear. This witness stated that they took position below the Hillock where huts of the Chakma were located and that the Shanti Bahini fired from behind the huts of the Chakma and from a higher position. He has stated in cross-examination that Shanti Bahini fired 200/300 rounds. Witness No. 57 Habilder Nurul Iman stated that after the fire from Shanti Bahini subsided or stopped they did not go to the place from where Shanti Bahini fired at them to collect any or any cartridge shells left by them.

I shall next refer to the statements of some Army officers who were posted in Panchari Sub-Zone at the time of the incident and are acquainted with the facts of the case from the reports received from B.D.R. camp at Logang as given by Subedar Habib (witness No. 55) and from their respective Subordinates. These witnesses are witness No. 56 Major Abul

Kalam Azad of 24 Rifles Battalion, Panchari, witness No. 61, Lt. Colonel Sheikh Amjad Hossain, Sector Comandar of B.D.R. and witness No. 66 Lt. Colonel Matin, Zone Commander, Panchari. Major Azad told me about similar facts regarding the incident as have been stated by the aforesaid witnesses, namely, Ansars, V.D.P.'s and B.D.R. personnel. He has stated that after he heard through wireless that Shanti Bahini had started firing he directed the B.D.R. to bring out a patrol party to confront the Shanti Bahini. He at the same time asked the Bangalees to move towards the Gool-Ghar of B.D.R. and to restrain them. He has further stated that he was informed that Chakma and Tripura huts were burning and even a portion of the B.D.R. camp was on fire. He asked the B.D.R. personnel to stop the fire, and after sometime he learnt, all the huts of the Chakmas had been burnt and part of the huts of Tripuras had also been burnt; and then he started towards place of occurrence and reached there at about 3 P.M. In cross-examination this witness stated; the members of Ansars and V.D.P. being panicky and out of fear fired a lot. He stated that the Chakmas never made any complaint against Shanti Bahini for fear of their lives and as such no Chakma tribals dared to make any complaint about the Shanti Bahini.

I shall next refer to the statement of another witness No. 66, Lt. Colonel Matin, Zone Commander of Panchari area. He has narrated in his written statement a detail, account of the incident. He has asserted that the number of death of the Chakmas are 11, Tripura's 1 and Bangalee 1 and that number of injured persons is 13. Besides them, 2 persons, according to the witnesses are missing.

The next witness who has disapproved the conduct of the Ansar, V.D.P. and B.D.R. personnel, and I shall refer to, is Lt Colonel Amjad Hossain, Sector Commander of B.D.R. (Witness No. 61) He has stated inter alia that Camp commander Habib could not judge the situation correctly and properly, and opened fire without judging the situation.

I shall now refer to certain statements of witness No. 65, Brig. Sharif Aziz, the Regional Commander of the area, which are relevant for the purpose of the enquiry. I shall not refer to the other matters in his statements as it will amount to repetition of the statements of other army officers regarding narration of the occurrence. This witness has stated that on account of the killing of a Bangalee boy and injuring of other boys by the miscreants (who would be none other than Shanti Bahinis) the Bangalee villagers were excited with revenge and having failed to restrain themselves on seeing the dead and injured Bangalee boys, attacked the Tribal village with members of V.D.P. and that the Bangalees and the V.D.P. were the principal movers of the incident of killing and arson of the tribal village.

I shall next refer to the statement of another class of witnesses all belonging to Chakma community, and its local leaders, and of them I shall relate in short their statements. They are witnesses No. 62 Minto Bikosh Chakma and witness No. 64 Jogadish Chandra Chakma, the former is the elected member of Khagrachari Hill District Local Govt. Council and the latter, the ex-Chairman of Panchari Upazila Parishad. Both of them have alleged that a tension was prevailing in the locality on account of punishment inflicted by the local arbitrator i.e. the Chairman of the Union Parishad on account of attempted assault upon a Chakma women by deceased Kabir Hossain.

These witnesses have admitted that on the date of occurrence (10th April, 1992) the aforesaid Bangalee boy named Kabir Hossain was killed and 2 other boys were injured by the miscreants while they were grazing their cattle in field near their village and that the Bangalees being excited to take revenge attacked the tribal villages and set fire to their huts and fired at them; the Bangalees also assaulted the tribals with sharp cutting weapons and as a result several tribals were killed and injured; the following day i.e. on 11.4.92 at about 9 A.M. they came to Logang along with the Regional Commander (Brigadier Sharif Aziz) and heard about the occurrence from

the tribals who were injured or affected in the incident. These two witnesses have narrated about the occurrence in the same manner as has been referred to above. These witnesses have named several Bangalees who were allegedly concerned in the attack and killing or injuring the tribals and burning of their huts. Witness No. 64 Jogadish Chandra further stated that Kalpo Ranjan Chakma, local member of Parliament asked him to file F.I.R. earlier about the incident and later on he filed other 4 F.I.R.S. (recorded as statements under Section 161 Cr. P.C. in connection with the 1st F.I.R. case lodged on behalf of the Tribals) through the relations of 4 deceased persons and that names of these 4 deceased persons were included in the list of 11 Chakma tribals who had died in the incident and recorded as such in the official list of the local Administration. He had however stated that besides 11 persons who had died in the incident 2 other persons are missing and it is apprehended they might have also died. Besides the 2 aforesaid witnesses from Chakma community I have examined several other leaders of Chakma and Tripura community who live in Khagrachari town. They are witness No. 9 Borendra Kumar Tripura, witness No. 10 Habin Kumar Tripura, witness No. 12 Buddhu Lal Chakma, witness No. 50 Ajoy Kumar Tripura, Witness No. 14 Jotindra Lal Tripura. They are residents of Khagrachari town as such they are not directly acquainted with the facts of the occurrence at Logang. They have however stated that they have heard in Khagrachari town that several persons have been killed and large number of huts belonging to the tribals have been burnt.

The next group of witnesses are from the place of occurrence namely witness No. 16 Tongo Chakma, witness No. 17 Kamala Kanta Narbari, witness No. 18 Kamala Ranjan Chakma, witness No. 19 Anil Chandra Chakma, witness No. 20 Thir Tharjaya Moni Chakma, witness No. 21 Kaj Chandra Chakma, witness No. 25 Sushil Chakma, witness No. 23 Anondo Moni Chakma, witness No. 24 Nirmal Chandra Karbari, witness No. 25 Sumati Ranjon Chakma, witness No. 26 Majagala Chakma, witness No. 27 Subol Chandra Chakma, witness No. 28

Hirendra Tripura, witness No. 29 Peari Mohan Chakma, witness No. 30 Brihat Chandra Tripura, witness No. 31 Bimolendu Chakma, witness No. 36 Rajendra Chakma witness No. 37 Rajon Mini Chakma witness No. 38 Bijon Chakma, witness no. 39 Kuri Shogi Chakma, witness No. 40 Priya Bala Chakma, witness No. 41 Buj Debi Chakma, witness No. 42 Janaki Chakma and from the locality where the incident took place. They were residents of the Chakma village which was burnt. These witnesses are very material and important ones inasmuch as that they were either direct witnesses to the occurrence or that their kins have either died or been injured or their huts have been burnt due to the incident. As regards the number of death, almost all of them have stated that 11 Chakma tribals, 1 Tripura tribal and 1 Bangalee boy have been killed in the incident. They have however refused to state or accept the suggestion that Shanti Bahini or any miscreant armed with firearms came to the place of occurrence and attacked the Bangalee or Chakma villages and set fire to the huts. They have stated that the Bangalees attacked the tribal village and set fire to their huts and as a result 11 Chakma and one Tripura were killed.

As against these evidences of the tribal leaders, and tribal persons affected in the incident, Bangalees from Logang and Panchari villages, namely witness No. 45 Kiren Bhuiyan, Chairman Logang Union Parishad, along with witness Nos. 32, 33, 34, 35, 52 and 53 (all inhabitants of Logang) have stated that armed miscreants killed Kabir Hossain and injured 2 other Bangalee boys and that Shanti Bahinis armed with fire-arms about 15-20 in strength, fired from the south western corner below the hillock where Chakma village situated. The Bangalee witnesses uniformly supported this version of the incident. The Bangalee witnesses have also stated that the Ansars, V.D.P. and B.D.R. fired at the Shanti Bahini after they were fired upon and as a result huts of the Chakma were burnt and 11 Chakmas died and 13 persons were injured in the incident.

I shall now refer to another set of witnesses who have been examined by me at Dhaka. They are witness No. 67 Shishir Moral, Reseacher, Bangladesh Human Right Co-ordination

Council, witness No. 68 Miss Sara Hossain, Barrister, witness No. 69 Mostafa Faruqe (Bangladesh Samajtantrio Dal) witness No. 70 Miss Rozlin Costa, witness No. 71 Chandra Shagar Chakma, witness No. 73 Proshit Bikash Khisha (President Central Committee, Pahari Chatra Parishad) witness No. 74 Mr. A F. Hasan Arif, Deputy Attorney General, witness No. 75 Shawkhin Chakma, witness No. 76 Kalpo Ranjeon Chakma, Member of Parliament. Some of the aforesaid witness namely Shishir Moral, Miss Sara Hossain, Mostafa Faruque and Miss Rozalin went to Khagrachari to attend a Baishakhi celebration of tribals on 11th April, 1992 and on hearing about the incident in Logang they went to Panchari which is about 16 miles from Khagrachari, and Logang is further 5 miles away. They could not go to Logang to have a visual inspection of the place of the incident of 10th April, 1992 as they were prevented by the Local Army officers from going towards Logang allegedly for security reasons. They have stated they on their return from Panchari to Khagrachari they picked up on the way a person named Baishista Moni Chakma who stated that his wife was killed and that on 11th April, 1992 Baishista Moni went to Logang village and saw the dead body of his wife along with other dead bodies but the authorities refused to give him the dead body (incidentally it may be mentioned that the wife of Beishista Moni Chakma appears in the list of 11 dead Chakma as perpared by the authority). Some of the aforesaid witnesses stated that when they met with Brigadier Sharif Aziz in Khagrachari he told them that the number of death is 138. I asked Brigadier Sharif Aziz about the statement of the witnesses in this regard. He denied having said so to these witnesses. He said that the number of total deaths were 13. Witness No. 74 Hasan Arif, Deputy Attorney General said that Brigadier Sharif Aziz while discussing about the incident said that the number of deaths would be 12/13 and out of the persons involved in the incident 16/17 persons had been arrested. These witnesses i.e. witness No. 67 to 71 have thrown all the responsibility upon Bangalee villagers and the members of V.D.P., Ansars and B.D.R. personnel for the incident.

I would next refer to statement of witness No. 73 Proshit Bikase Khisha, President of Hill Tract Students Council (Pahari Chatra Parishad). In his written statement he has not said anything about the incident that took place on 10th April, 1992. But in his cross-examination by me he has state that the killing of Kabir Hossain was a result of a quarrel among Bangalee boys while they were playing marbels. He has also stated that the Bangalees have attacked the tribal village by way of a revenge against the tribals and the V.D.Ps and Ansars attacked the Chakma village and burnt their huts and indiscriminately fired at them, and as a result a large number of Chakma died. This witness further has stated in cross-examination, he has no personal knowledge about the number of deaths but nevertheless they have prepared the list of dead persons upon hearing from others and accordingly they published the names of 138 dead persons. This witnesses has stated about the demand of the tribals for self-rule, restoration of Regulation No. 1 of 1900 with constitutional protection, control of entry of non-tribals and constituting a Parliamentary Committee for solution of the problem etc. and demanded punishment of the persons who were responsible for the incident.

With regard of the controversy about the number of deaths, I shall refer, besides a large number of Chakma witnesses (witness No. 16 to 42) whose depositions have been adverted to about, the statements of 22 persons who have been produced before me out of the persons named in the journal 'Radder' as killed in the incident. The names of these 22 persons being certified by Karbaris and the local Chairman, are the same whose names appeared in the list of dead persons in the statement of Pahari Chatra Parishad as well as in their journal named 'Radder'. In this regard, I am also inclined to refer to an affidavit sown by local Headmen, Karbaris and the Chairman of the Logang Union Parishad, stating that the list published in 'Radder' was fictitious and baseless and that most of the persons listed in the 'Radder' journal are in fact alive and living in villages nearby.

I shall next refer to the statement of the leaders of the Political parties of Khagrachari, namely witness 11, 13, 15, 49, 54, 77 and 82 who are respectively leaders of Awami League, Jatiya Party and B.N.P. etc. They have stated that 10-12 Chakmas died in the incident and some of them have stated that the incident took place due to the attack of armed Shanti Bahini who fired at the security personnel. I shall refer to their statements regarding the situation in Hill Tracts while I make the recommendations as to how to prevent recurrence of similar incidents and about other incidental matters. How with regard to the statements of official witnesses from Panchari, namely the Officer-in-Charge of Panchari P.S., A.S.I. of Police, Panchari and the U.N.O., Panchari, I may say that they are witnesses of truth. The statement of witness No. 89 A.S.I. Ashok Kumar Biswas is very important. On the day of occurrences this witness was in-charge of the P.S. He went to the place of occurrence with the medical officer, Panchari. On reaching Logang he found 11 dead bodies of Chakma tribe and made inquest of them. He also made an inquest of the dead body of Kabir Hossain and thereafter made over the dead bodies to Dr. Zahurul Islam for ascertaining the cause of deaths. He stayed in the night in the B.D.R. camp and asked the tribals to make complaint about the incident. On the following day Brigadier Sharif Aziz, the Superintendent of Police and the A.D.C. (Revenue) came to Logang and inspected the place and questioned the persons regarding the incident. On the next day another dead-body of a child was recovered from a burnt-hut with burn injuries. The A.S.I. also made an inquest of the dead-body. The Doctor accordingly issued a death certificate in respect of this dead child incorporating the cause of death. He further stated that 13 dead bodies were handed over for burial and cremation. He recorded all the incident in G.D. after his return to the P.S. He further stated that 2 cases were lodged, one by Kiron Bhuiya, Chairman of the Union Parishad and another by a Tribal and that the investigation of these cases were proceeding. In Cross-examination the witness stated that he found no alamats such as shells of fired cartridges which were allegedly used by Shanti Bahini from their alleged firing positions. He nevertheless seized

blood stained earth from the place where Kabir had been killed. The Officer-in-charge, witness No. 90 has similarly stated about the occurrence while corroborating the statement of A.S.I. that no alammats or shells of cartridges could be found from where the Shanti Bahini alleged to have fired. This witness stated that he had arrested the persons against whom the allegation had been made in the F.I.R. and that the investigation of the cases are proceeding.

The next witness whom I shall refer to is witness No. 91 U H O., Panchari. He has stated that the tribals were unhappy about the settlement of Bangalees in the Hill Tracts from the beginning and non-tribals are always afraid to go out of their security zone for fear of Shanti Bahini; the tribals who had gone to India support Shanti Bahini's apparent objective i.e. the autonomy of the Hill Tracts : after the present Democratic Government has been installed in power the tribals started returning from India but Shanti Bahini wanted that the tribals should not return but stay in India and support them in their insurgency operation in the Hill Tracts; hence, the witness states, the Shanti Bahinis always are trying to create a situation endangering law and order so that the tribals would go to India. According to this witness the incident of 10th April, 1992 in Logang clustered village was the result of a situation created by Shanti Bahini by killing and injuring the boys so that the Bangalees would retaliate against the tribals who would leave the clustered village and proceed to India. He states that some members of Shanti Bahini, B.D.R., V.D.Ps and some people of clustered village were responsible for the incident.

P.W. 99 Dr. Zahurul Islam went to the place of occurrence on the same day along with the A.S.I. witness No. 89. He has corroborated the statement of other witnesses regarding the number of deaths and the nature of injuries inflicted upon them.

I shall now refer to the statement of witness No. 76 Babu Kalpa Ranjon Chakma, member of Parliament for Khagrachari

He has not seriously contested the number of tribals died in the incident as asserted and recorded by the local administration but has nevertheless stated that the number would be higher than what has been given by the authorities. In his statement, the member of Parliament has suggested that a Parliamentary Committee should be constituted, and after consultation and negotiation with all parties including Shanti Bahini and Gana-Sanghati Party, the problem should be settled. He has also suggested abolition of clustered villages and that the civil administration should be kept free from army control. He has stated, the refugees in India should be brought back and their lands be given to them.

I have also examined some witnesses produced by Pahari Chatra Parishad, Khagrachari Unit. These witnesses are Nos. 71, 85, 86, 87 and 93. They have asserted, the number of deaths was larger than what has been said by other witnesses. Their statements regarding the number of deaths appear to be on a guess, and imaginary. None of the local Chakma witnesses has supported the number of casuality as propagated by Pahari Chatra Parishad.

I shall now advert to the reference made in the notification constituting the Commission for enquiry and report. The references are :

- (a) Where the incidence took place;
- (b) To ascertain the cause of incident.
- (c) Who were responsible for the incident;
- (d) To recommend measures as to how such incident could be prevented.
- (c) Any incidental matter.

Findings and Recommendations

As the out set it would not be out of the place to refer to the geographical and historical facts of the land. Chittogong Hill Tracts occupies more than 10th of the landmass of Bangla-

desh. Historically the area was part of Chittagong District until 1860. The East India Company or the British Government in India did not disturb the tribes of the area, as many as 13 tribes, except for collection of revenue. In this connection it may be stated that the original inhabitants of Hill Tracts were Kukis and Har-mas who usually inhabited the northern portion of the Hill Tracts adjoining the present Mijoram area of India. The Chakmas which is the major tribe in the Hill Tracts came there from Arakan some 200 years back and settled mainly in Rangamati region. Bangalees also started to settle there since 10th century. The religion of the tribes are mainly Buddhist, some are Hindus and some are Christian and few lesser tribes are animists. The economy of the Hill Tracts was mainly shiftings slash and burn farming, locally known as 'Jhoom' cultivation. Originally there was no cultivation with plough and ox. After 1947 small number of Bangalees begun to settle in Rangamati and other small towns of the Hill Tracts and they engaged in trading and business. The rate of literacy in Hill Tracts before 1947 was very low but since then specially after independant of Bangladesh tribes specially Chakmas advanced a lot in education and in services specially Government services and in Banks. The Chittagong Hill Tracts Regulation No. 1 of 1900 was the first legal provision promulgated as a Non-regulated District. This law was enacted to protect the right and interest of the tribals, their customs and practices but in the twenties and thirties this regulation was amended to enable the people from other Districts of Bengal to settle down in Hill Tracts on account of trade and commerce.

I shall now deal with and answer the reference in seriatum.
Terms of reference of the Commission :

(a) Where the incident took place.

It is not disputed that the occurrence of attacking of Bangalee boys and killing one of them and injuring others took place in a field near the clustered Bangalee village in Logang Bazar and in consequence of which clustered huts of the tribals were burnt and 12 tribals

were killed in Logang village within P.S. Panchari in the District of Khagrachari.

- (b) To ascertain the caused of the incident.

It is not denied that the educated tribals were unhappy over since the settlement of Bangalees in the Hill Tracts as a whole and this feeling aggravated in 1978 after a large number of landless unemployed Bangalee families moved to Hill Tract Districts and lands were settled to them. After 1986 till now about 80% of the Bangalee population, the largest majority community in Hill Tracts were moved to clustered villages for their protection. Similarly the tribals who returned from India against the wishes of Shanti Bahini were also settled in clustered villages. Shanti Bahini i.e. the insurgents whose present objective is the creation of 'Jhum land' comprising of the Hill Tract Districts, having their bases in India did not like the Bangalees and tribals to live in clustered villages and thereby loose the opportunity to harass and kill Bangalees, and on the other hand the support and shelter from the tribals. Hence the insurgents Shanti Bahini were always looking for opportunity to create enmity and tension between the Bangalees and tribals which could result in violence against the tribals by the Bangalees so that the tribals would leave the clustered village and go elsewhere if not to India. The aim of Shanti Bahini is to take tribals to India so that they could recruit and train a large number of insurgents in Indian bases and operate in Hill Tracts.

The incident in Logang, viz. the attack of Chakma village resulting in complete burning of about 550 huts of the tribals and killing of 12 tribals is the result of the planned objective of the insurgents. The armed Shanti Bahini killed a Banalee boy named Kabir Hossain and seriously injured 2 others after attacking them while they were grazing cattle in the field near

the village, and it was aimed to create a tension between the Bangalee and tribals so that the Bangalees would retaliate and avenge the murder of Bangalees.

From the statement and materials produced before me I have no hesitation to hold that the incident of burning and attacking the tribals in Logang was a back-lash and not of revenge on the part of the Bangalees to avenge the murder of Kabir Hossain and seriously injuring other Bangalee boys.

As regards the murder of Kabir Hossain and injuring other boys, I am final of the view on consideration of all the evidence and materials that it was done deliberately by Shanti Bahini so as to create a situation of attacking the tribals. But the allegation of the Bangalees that later on (in the second phase) armed insurgents appeared behind the Hillcock on which Chakma village was situated, though asserted by the Bangalees and V.D.P., Ansars and B.D.R. personnel, does not appear to me to have any substance. Not a single Chakma witness, amongst more than 20 witness who have supported the case of authorities as to the number of deaths and other matters, has stated that after the killing of Kabir Hossain, another group of Chakma insurgents came to the clustered village and fired from their positions. It is apparent that out of tension and panic resulting from fear of attack from the Shanti Bahini, the Ansars and members of V.D.P. fired at the Chakma village while the Bangalees have already set fire to the huts which were completely burnt because in the month of Chaitra i.e. in hot summer, these huts made of grass and bamboo would be engulfed with fire and destroyed in no time.

Beside the evidence of Chakma leaders (Montu Bikash Chakma and Jogodish Chakma of Panchari), it appears from the evidence of U.N.O. Panchari and the veiled statements of the local officers, both military and the civil, attributing the incident of burning of the huts and firing at the tribals to the Bangalees along with Ansars and members of V.D.P., I may reasonably hold that a section of Bangalees of the locality along with the members of Ansars and V.D.P. were responsible

for the incident of burning of the huts of the Chakma village and firing at them resulting in the death of the tribals. I further hold that the incident of burning and firing at the Tribals of the Chakma village was the backlash and the result of revenge on the part of the Bangalees to avenge the murder of Kabir Hossain and seriously injuring the other Bangalee boys.

As regards the casualty, that is, the number of deaths and injuries on account of the firing by the Bangalees along with Ansars and members of V.D.P. it has been alleged by a section of the tribals specially Pahari Chatra Parishad that the number of persons killed was 138 and they have printed a list of the names of 130 persons allegedly died, in a journal named 'Radder'. They have also given to the commission the same list in their written statements sent to Khagrachari office of the Commission. The Administration has asserted that 11 Chakma, 1 Tripura and 1 Bangalee died and that 13 persons were injured in the incident. Witness No. 66 Lt. Colonel Hatir Commander, Panchari Zone has supplied to the Commission an authenticated list of persons died in the incident. With regard to the number of death I have anxiously considered the evidence placed before me. Firstly, I shall refer to the evidence of A.S.I. Panchari (officiating o.c.) and the Medical Officer, Panchari, the Civil Officers who reached the place of occurrence at the earliest on the same day from Panchari. They have stated that they found dead bodies of 11 Chakma tribals and 1 Tripurn tribal and 1 Bangalee accumulated near the Union Parishad Office. It appears to me, they went to the place of occurrence simultaneously with the Army Officers who have also stated, the number of death of the tribals was 12. Besides these official witnesses the local Chakma leaders of Panchari namely witness No. 62 Mantu Bikash Chakma and witness No. 64 Jogodish Chakma who have boldly and fairly thrown the responsibility of the incident upon the Bangalees, the Ansars and V.D.Ps. have also stated that the number of deaths of the tribals is 12. Besides the direct evidence, the Administration has produced or placed on record papers to show that several persons who have been shown to be dead in the statement of

Pahari Chatra Parishad in Journal 'Radder' are alive and the Local Administration has produced about 22 of them. I questioned the witnesses produced by Chatra Parishad as to whether they have any direct evidence as to the number of death of the tribals. They frankly admitted that they have no direct evidence but they have prepared the list and compiled them on receipt of the names from other persons. Pahari Chatra Parishad has produced before me at Khagrachari some witnesses who have alleged that they have seen a large number of dead bodies after the incident but they did not count them. These witnesses have alleged that they come to the place of occurrence on a visit and that they are not residents of Logang village. Some of them have said that they have not seen Chandra Shagor Chakma witness No. 71 who alleged that he saw 150 dead bodies but strangely when the Regional Commander, Brigadier Sharif Aziz came to the place of occurrence next day he wanted the dead bodies of 11 Chakra tribals for private cremation. He did not tell the Brigadier about the death of 150 persons.

In this view I am not inclined to hold that number of death would be higher than what has been stated by the officiating O.C., the Medical Officer, Panchari and the aforesaid Chakma leaders of Panchari. Besides the evidence of the aforesaid persons, I have noticed that several other Chakma tribals who present at the place of occurrence although have stated that the number of deaths of tribals was 12. Besides the direct evidence about the number of deaths, in my view, it is impossible to dispose of such a large number of dead bodies and/or to remove them and/or to hide them in any place because such a large number of dead bodies can not be removed except by vehicles and they are to be disposed of near the road and that any such disposal of dead bodies cannot be concealed. In these view of evidence and circumstances, I have no hesitation to hold that the number of deaths did not exceed more than 12 tribals and the number of huts burnt were admittedly about 550.

(c) Who were responsible for the incident.

How as regard the persons who are responsible for the incident, I have alluded above that the Bangalees, Ansars and Members of B.D.P. were responsible for the incident. The local Army Administration has already taken into custody, some Ansars and Members of V.D.P. who are responsible for the incident. Chakma leaders as well as the Chakma tribals have named the persons who have instigated the Bangalee and/or taken part in the incident directly. In my view the F.I.R. case lodged on behalf of the tribals should be thoroughly investigated by competent Police Officers or by the Criminal Investigation Department (C.I.D.) so that the persons responsible for the incident may be tried and punished.

In this connection it would be apt to refer to the conduct of some B.D.R. personnel who were on duty in the B.D.R. camp when Bangalees being excited over the death of Kabir Hossain and injuring of other boys came to the B.D.P. camp. It is on record that Subedar Habib after informing the Panchari Sub-Zonal Head-Quarter about the situation went out with a patrol party allegedly to confront the Shanti Bahinis who have killed Kabir Hossain and injured other boys. But when the excited Bangalees came to the camp witness No. 57 Nurul Iman rang the alarm bell and made over fire-arms with 20 rounds of ammunition to all the Ansars and members of V.D.P. (as stated by witness No. 1-8) and these armed persons allegedly took position on the security parameter of the clustered huts and admittedly fired about 300/350. They admitted, they fired towards the tribal clustered village. From a reading of the evidences of witness Nos. 1-8, in my view Habilder Nurul Iman failed to properly handle the excited Bangalees and indiscretly gave arms to the Ansars and V.D.Ps. I have already found that cogent evidence about the presence of 15/20 Shanti Fahini with fire arms is lacking [and hence Ansars and members of V.D.P. fired from] their rifles out of fear and panic caused by killing of Kabir Hossain by Shanti Bahini insurgent who might not be armed with fire-arms. Habilder Iman Ali ought to have shown a little bit of caution and prudence and waited till

Subedar Major Habib would contact or encounter and Shanti Bahini insurgents, I therefore put on record my disapproval of the conduct of Habilder Nurul Iman in the incident.

- (d) To recommend measures as how such incident could be prevented.

My recommendation as to how to prevent such incidents in future. I have found that the murder of Kabir Hossain and injuring of Bangalee boys in a field near the Bangalee village was done by the Shanti Bahini to create a situation so that the Bangalee would take revenge upon the tribals who would leave the locality and proceed either to India or disperse to other locations outside the security perimeter of the Army and that the Shanti Bahini could take shelter and get support from them. To frustrate the design of the insurgents, the primary objective of the local Administration must be to maintain law and order and to deal with the tribals and the Bangalees alike and impartially. It is said that a section of dishonest and crooked Bangalee settlers some times harass or cheat the tribals with regard to the transfer or possession of land. It has however been alleged by the Bangalees that there are also some unscrupulous and crooked tribals as well who sometimes cheat the Bangalees in transactions with the tribals. It is undeniable that the tension and ill feeling between the Bangalee community and tribal community of the Hill tracts are in substantial measure related to possession and dispossession of land and such disputes are at the fore all over the Hill Tracts. Hence it is high time that land survey should be immediately started for preparation of records as to titles and possession of owners or claimants of land. If land survey is made a substantial cause of tension and enmity between the 2 communities would be eradicated.

In this connection acts of insurgency of the Shanti Bahini is a major factor in perpetuating tension and enmity between the 2 communities. For years the tribals and non-tribals, lived in peace and harmony; they lived like one people and respected other's culture and tradition but the insurgency disturbed communal harmony, and the Bangalees were blamed as infiltrators and they became the main target of the insurgents.

The cruelty committed upon the Bangalee community by the insurgents cannot be explained politically since they have settled in the Hill Tracts as citizens of Bangladesh like any other tribals who have settled and acquired properties in the towns of the plain Districts. It is pertinent to point out that from 1980 to 1991 attack of Shanti Bahini resulted in 952 deaths, 652 injuries and 411 kidnappings of Bangalees.

In the same period 188 deaths, 152 injuries, 205 kidnappings of tribals were committed by the Shanti Bahini. From the situation at present obtaining in the Hill Tracts it appears to me that the safety of Bangalee community is in danger.

Except in 3 police station of Khagrachari district most of the Bangalee settlers have been removed to clustered villages within a security perimeter for fear of Shanti Bahini and the settlers are living there in pitiable condition in poverty without any work or occupation. I shall refer again about the clustered villages of Bangalees and tribals in the later portion of my report.

To bring about harmony and amity between the 2 communities of the Hill Tracts, insurgency of the Shanti Bahini is to be curbed and checked. It is gratifying to learn that the extent or intensity of insurgency has reduced to a large extent mainly in areas around the towns and in some rural areas where Bangalee community mainly inhabit in the area. While recommending that the insurgency should be checked and curbed by the Army Units as their primary duty, the civil officials of the districts should be left to do their duties without any hindrance or bottle-neck so that the civil Administration can deal with the tribal population in a more liberal manner. That is to say, that the Army Units stationed in the Hill Tracts should not do any work relating to civil Administration except those which are connected with the operation of counter-insurgency. Success of counter insurgency will bring peace in the Hill Tracts.

Here I want to put on record, the presence of Army Units in the Hill Tracts would be necessary as long as the insurgency

of the Shanti Bahini continues. Army has done a commendable job in reducing the intensity of insurgency and they are facing hardship and hazards in the Hill Tracts boldly and courageously. The army may be withdrawn if the insurgents give up their arms, and unless this happens nobody will suggest the withdrawal of the Army from the Hill Tracts. I may also put on record that the level of casualty in the Hill Tracts at the hands of the Army in counter insurgency operation is very low compared to the situation in some parts of the sub-continent or elsewhere in the world. Not a single case of extra-judicial execution as done elsewhere in some countries in the name of integrity of the country or suppression of terrorism, or extra-legal detention, has been brought to the notice of the commission.

(e) Any incidental matters.

With regard to the incidental matters which have cropped up in the enquiry I may recommend that in the interest of peace in the Hill Tracts as several witnesses including the local officials have stated, the disputes between two communities namely the tribals and Bangalees should be enquired into and settled by a Parliamentary committee of Bangladesh Parliament.

It may be observed that insurgency of Shanti Bahini can be solved if India as a gesture of good-will towards Bangladesh shows a little apathy towards Shanti Bahinis in that country where they have their bases for recruitment, training and get supply of arms and ammunition. This matter obviously depends upon the desire and good intention of the Indian Government. There apart, we should do all our best to counter the insurgency operation of Shanti Bahini and at the same time a Parliamentary Committee should work out a solution, and recommend to the Government such action as they may deem fit and proper.

I have been told by several witnesses and suggested by responsible civil officers that the clustered villages of the Bangalees as well as of the Chakmas should be gradually dismantled and they should be rehabilitated and settled in their respective villages where they have their lands and orchards

obtained by way of settlement. The Bangalee villagers should be dispersed and sent to their respective villages but they must raise their own security force namely village Defence party who should be given arms and training for protection of the village in case of an attack by Shanti Bahinis, and the members of V.D.P. should be under the supervision and control of the respective Police Station.

I have noticed that Logang incident regarding the number of deaths of the tribals have been inflated and magnified in a section of international press : it has been reported that casualty in the incident was over 1000 which is clearly an imaginary one and a concoction beyond proportion. Bangladesh being a poor country has not the appropriate clout to obtain the support of international press, and if a country desires to malign and internationally harm us, it can be easily done. In this regard our foreign office should be more vigilant and alert to counter-act malicious and baseless propaganda against Bangladesh.

Before I part with the report for submission I am pleased to record an appreciation of the efficient work done by Mr. Md. Abdul Matin Sirker, the Secretary of the Commission (Additional District Magistrate, Khagrachhari) in carrying out his duties with minimum resources, and I accordingly recommend favourable consideration by the authorities in matter of his promotion and elevation in service.

I also put on record my satisfaction in receiving all co-operation from those who have appeared before the Commission and helped to place all materials for the commission to complete its task.

Sd/—(Justice Sultan Hossain Khan)
Chairman

Logang Disturbances Enquiry
Commission 1992

obtained by way of statement. The British subject, who was arrested and sent to the prison at the same time, was a man of about 30 years of age, of the same height and weight as the other, and of the same complexion. He was dressed in a white shirt and trousers, and was wearing a white cap. He was taken to the prison at the same time as the other, and was kept in the same cell. He was released on the same day as the other, and was sent to the same place. He was taken to the prison at the same time as the other, and was kept in the same cell. He was released on the same day as the other, and was sent to the same place.

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Index

A

- Aajya Lankar, 41
- Abhi Raja, 8
- Aggavansa Mahathero, 93
- Alhkada, 2
- Amnesty International reports, 80
- Anand Vhikku, 40
- Anti Slavery Society, 92
- Arakan, 2
- Arakan, king of, 11
- Ari Monks, 38
- Ashok Dewan, 74
- Awami League, 69

B

- Baghichari, 2
- Bandarban, 2
- Bangladesh High Commissioner, 87
- Bangladesh People's Democratic Movement, 92
- Bangladesh, adoption of constitution, 72
- Bara Mitra Vhikkhu, 40
- Barkal, 2
- Basitang, 2
- Bhatya Puja, 43

- Bimal Bhikku, 93
- Buddha Ghosa, 38
- Buddhism, Ceylon school, 38
- Buddhism, Chkma religion, 37
- Bur Par Puja, 43
- Butbunl, 2

C

- CHT Tribal Welfare Association, 68
- CHT, Mujib's attitude, 72
- CHT, demographic transition, 75-76
- CHT, deployment of para military forces, 74-75
- CHT, formation of Hill districts, 84-86
- CHT, formation of Zila Parishads, 84-85
- CHT, influx of Bengali Muslims, 75-76
- CHT, reorganisation, 77
- Chaitoi Larma, 73
- Chakamas, physical features, 12
- Chakma Movement, inter group rivalry, 78-79
- Chakma insurgency, ceasefire, 89-90
- Chakma language, 46-50

- Chakma language, grammer and syntax, 50-60
- Chakma language, script, 47
- Chakma language, sentence structure, 50-52
- Chakma marriages, two type, 19
- Chakma problems, Swedish response, 81
- Chakma society, judicial functions, 35-36
- Chakma villages, 24-26
- Chakma, games, 29
- Chakma, generic term, 3
- Chakma, pronounciation, 3
- Chakma, refugees, 78
- Chakmas, collateral lines, 15
- Chakmas, crime and punishment, 32-33
- Chakmas, customary laws, 31
- Chakmas, death Cermonies, 21
- Chakmas, dress, 27
- Chakmas, food and drinks, 28
- Chakmas, marriage, 18
- Chakmas, musical instruments, 30
- Chakmas, problem of insurgency, 81
- Chakmas, relegion, 37
- Chakmas, the orign, 7
- Chakmas, violation of human rights, 80
- Champak Nagar, 8
- Chandroghana, 63
- Chaudhry, M.N. Roy, 93
- Chittagong Hill Tracts Campagin, reports 71-72
- Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission, 88-89
- Chittagong Hill Tracts Frontier Police Regulation 111,65
- Chittagong Hill Tracts Regulation Act, 66
- Chittagong Hill Tract, Eastern boundry, 1
- Chittagong Hill Tracts, Muslim settlements, 67-69
- Chittagong Hill Tracts altitude, 1
- Chittagong Hill Tracts, chequered history, 61-64
- Chittagong Hill Tracts, division of, 63-64
- Chittagong Hill Tracts, economy, 67-68ha
- Chittagong Hili Tracts, hydro-electric dam, 67
- Chittagong Hill Tracts, latitude, 1
- Chittagong Hill Tracts, massacres by Mukti Bahini, 70-71
- Chittagong Hill Tracts, removal of tribal status, 68
- Chumulong, 19
- D
- Dha-Nгаа-Wa-Ti, 7
- Dhabana Gudithi, 16
- Dharam Baksh Khan, 62
- Dhuriya Gudthi 16
- Dighinala, 2
- Dinnwadi, 42
- District Councils, rejection by JSS, 85-86
- E
- East Pakistan, civil war, 70
- East Pakistan, demand for autonomy, 69-71
- East Pakistan, repression, 69

F

Ferozpur, 64

G

Ga-Tsha-Ba, 8

Gajas, list of, 16-18

Gang Puja, 43

Gojenloma, 50

Gudthi, 15

H

Hill District Council Bills, 82

Hill District Council Bills, opposition of Chakmas, 82-83

Huien Tsang, 4

Human Rights Commission, UN, 92

Hunter, William, 37

Hussain Mohammed Irshad, 76

I

India Partition Act, 64

International Fellowship Reconciliation, 92

J

Jalal Khan, 61

Jana Ratan Vhikkhu, 40

Jana Sanghati Samiti, 68, 73-76, 84-93

Jorabandha, 20

Jukto Gramm, 77

Jyotirindra Narayan Larma, 73

K

Kapil Nagar, 7

Kapilvastu, invasion of, 9

Karnaphuli, 1

Khadi, 27

Khagrachari, 2

Khaleda Zia, discussion with India, 89

Kosala, prince of, 10

Kurjaya Gudthi, 16

Kyang Thaga, 24

Kyauno, 44

Kyayungtha, 40

Lama, 2

L

Laxmichari, 2

Longudu, 2

Luraimatang, 2

M

Ma Lakhi Puja, 43

Mahalchari, 2

Mahamuni, 41

Mahayana, 40

Manabeddra Narayan Larma, 72

Manamuni temple, 11

Manikechari, 2

Marek Yaja, 12

Marriage laws, 33

Matamari, 4

Matamuri, 1

Matiranga, 2

Mejang, 29

Mendar Guduthi, 16

Mir Kasem Khan, 61-62

Moree Khyong, 5

N

Nanichari, 2

P

Pala Dhan Vhikku, 40

Panchuri, 2

Parbatta Chattagram Nibbachan Samity, 68

Parbattya Bhikku Samgha, 68
 Parbattya Chattagram Jana
 Sanghati Samiti, 73
 Parbattya Chattal Buddha Anath
 Ashram, 93
 Pemberton, R Beileau, 10
 Pheni, 1
 Pindi Dan, 22
 Pinon, 27
 Pira Bhanga Gudhuti, 16
 Preeti Kumar Chakma, 78
 Priya Ratan Vhikku, 40
 Punnaha, 16

Q

Quimara, 2

R

Raja Tridiv Roy, 66
 Rajiv Gandhi, concern for
 chakmas, 81
 Ramgarh, 2
 Rang Dang, 2
 Rangamati, 2
 Rangoonia, 11
 Rao, P.V. Narasimha, 89
 Rashed Khan Menon, 76
 Redcliff Boundry Commission,
 64
 Ruma, 2

S

SAARC, 81
 Sahjahan Siraj, 76
 Sajek, 1
 Sakya, 8

Sangu, 1
 Satkinya, 22
 Shaista Khan, 12
 Shanti Bahini, division of, 90
 Shanti Bahini, formation of, 78
 Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, 69
 Sher Daulat Khan, 62
 Shermust Khan, 61
 Shilananda, 41
 Sonargaon, 11
 Survival International, reports,
 81-83

T

Tagaung Yazawa, 8
 Tantrik Buddhism, 38
 Thanmana Puja, 43
 Thaton Buddhism, 38
 Thega, 1
 Tribal Students Association, 8
 Tripura, influx of chakmas, 80
 Tyambang, 2

U

U.N. High Commissioner for
 Refugees, 79
 Upendra Lal Chakma, 76

V

Ven Aggavansa Mahathero, 74

Z

Ziar Rehman, 74
 Ziaur Rehman, assasination of,
 76

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 Status of Muslim Women in India
 Status of Nurses in India
 Status of Rural Women in India
 Status of Single Women in India
 Scheduled Caste and their Status in India
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 Pai Panandiker, V.A.
 Verma, J.S.
 Shukla, K.S. and Verma, B.M.
 Vohra, G.
 Om Parkash, S.
 Tripathi & Tiwari
 Tiwari and Tripathi
 Nischlal, Surendra
 Ghosh, Shubhra
 Singh, S.S. & Sundaram, S.
 Khan, Mumtaz Ali
 Khan, Mumtaz Ali
 Sharma, Bharti
 Kamble, N.D.
 Khan, Mumtaz Ali.
 Alam, M.R.
 Pai Panandiker, V.A
 Pai Panandiker, V.A.
 Balan, K
 Mishra, S.N.
 Durrany, K.S.
 Chatterji, J.
 Khan, Mumtaz Ali
- Misra, R.G. & Kaur, G.
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 Menon, M.Indu
 Mohan, N. Shantha
 Khan, Mumtaz Ali
 Krishnakumari, N.S.
 Khan, Mumtaz Ali
 Ray, B. Datta

 Rita, Rozario
 Hussain, Amir IAS
 Singh, K.P.
 Rajgopal, P.R. *IPS*
 Narayana, E.A
 Singh, G.